6
Delicious in Dungeon
RYOKO KUI

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Ryoko Kui

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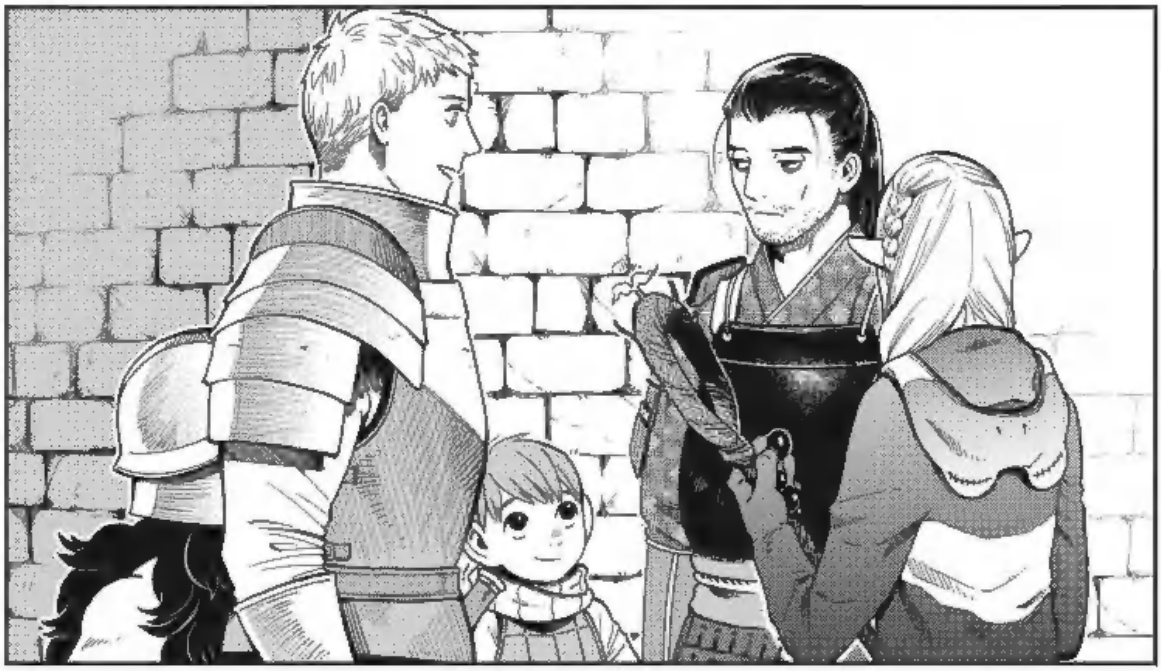
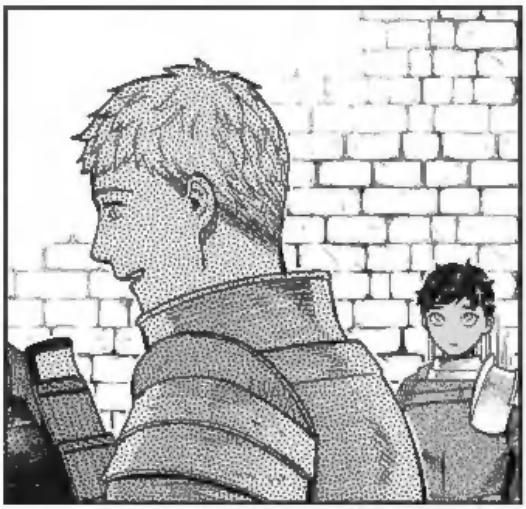
36. Dried with Sweet Sake

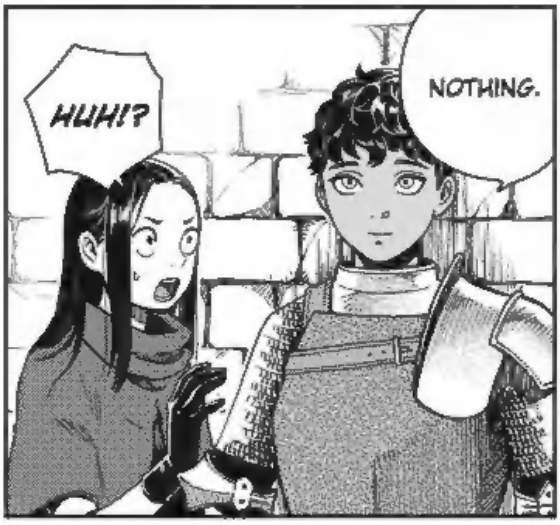


...IT'S THEM, ISN'T IT? THE ONES WHO STOLE FROM US?
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

SAY, KABRU...



THEN WHY DID WE COME ALL THIS WAY...?


HUH!?
NOTHING.

HMM ...

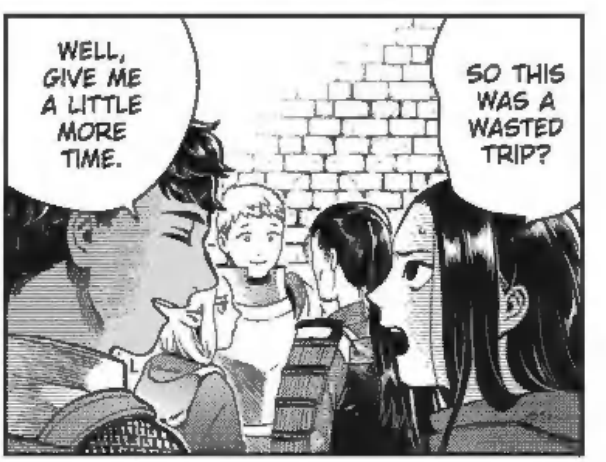
URK...

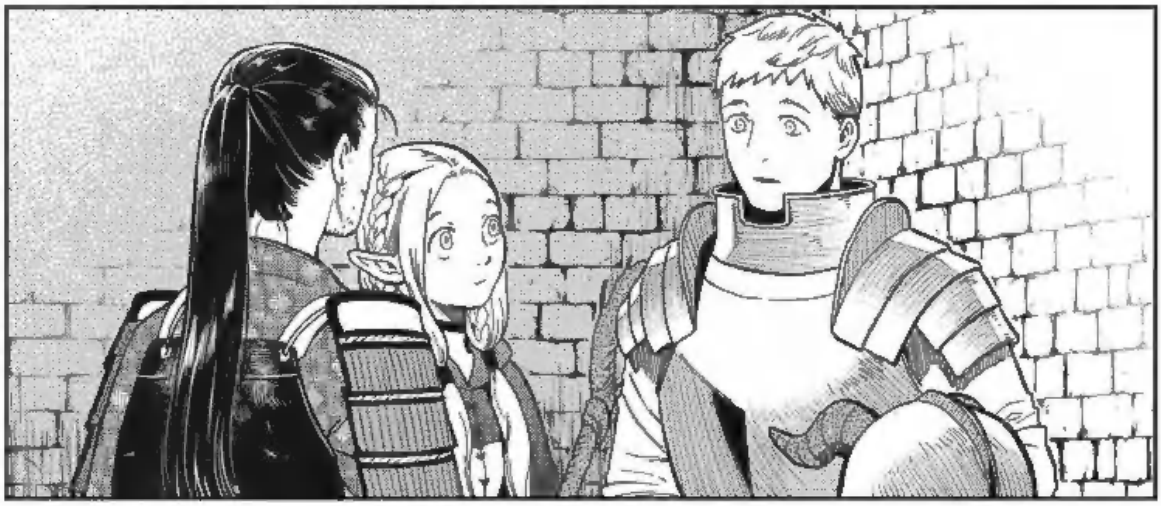
I WANTED TO MEET THEM.
?

MAYBE THEY FORGOT. MAYBE WE WERE WRONG.
MAYBE THE JEWELS WERE A TRAP.
OR IT COULD BE ALL THOSE THINGS.

I DOUBT THERE'S ANY POINT IN ASKING ABOUT THE JEWELS.
THEY DIDN'T LOOK UNEASY WHEN THEY SAW US.

YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW THEY GOT HERE...
...AND WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO DO, DON'T YOU?


SO THIS WAS A WASTED TRIP?
WELL, GIVE ME A LITTLE MORE TIME.

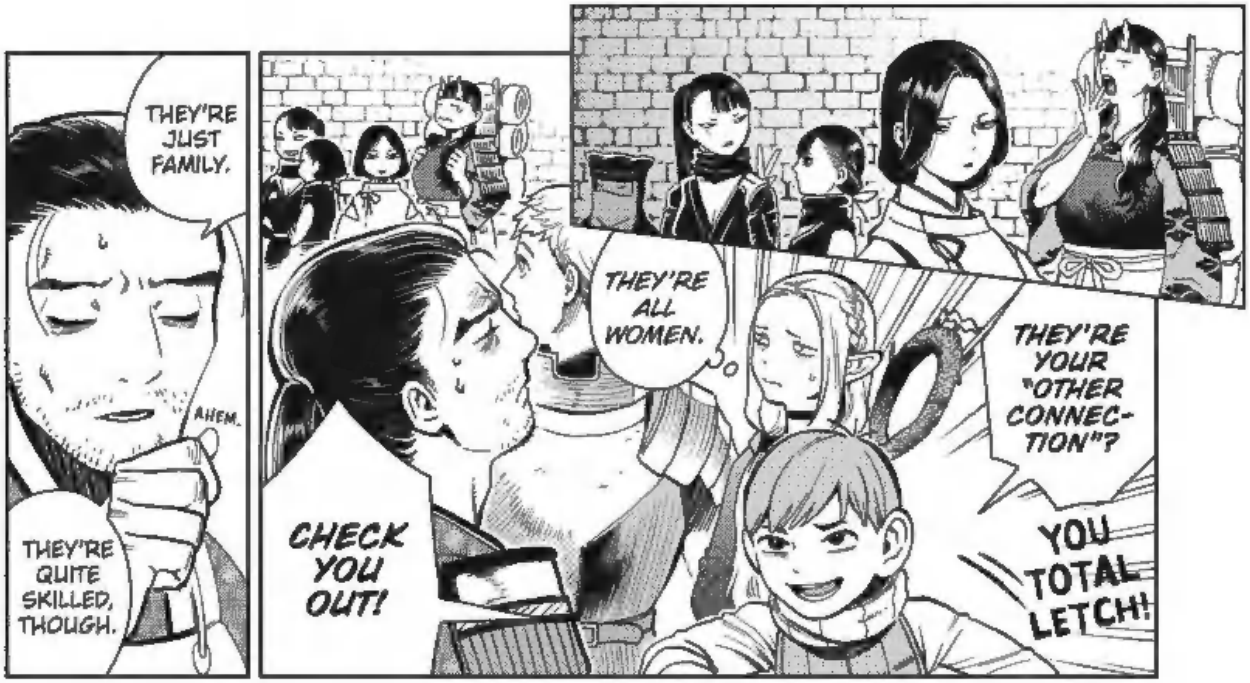


WE WERE GOING IN CIRCLES, AND JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT WE'D FOUND AN EXIT, IT WOULD LEAD SOMEWHERE ELSE.
WE GOT REALLY LOST TOO.

SO! YOU'VE BEEN ON THIS FLOOR FOR QUITE A WHILE, SHURO?
YEAH.

ちらっ
CHIRA (GLANCE)
STILL, SHURO, YOU...

I SEE.
CHILCHUCK FOUND THE PATTERN TO THE CHANGES, THOUGH...
...AND WE FINALLY MADE IT HERE.


THEY'RE JUST FAMILY.
AHEM.
THEY'RE QUITE SKILLED, THOUGH.
CHECK YOU OUT!
THEY'RE ALL WOMEN.
THEY'RE YOUR "OTHER CONNEC-TION"?
YOU TOTAL LETCH!

I'M SORRY.
...I THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE THE BEST WAY TO GET BACK INTO THE DUNGEON AND FIND HER.
THAT'S FINE. THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY.

GABA (BOLT)
...I APOLOGIZE FOR LEAVING THE PARTY.
HEY, HE'S ALIVE.
HOWEVER, WHEN I REALIZED SHE WASN'T ABOVE-GROUND...

JUST SO YOU'RE AWARE...

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE IF SOMEONE GOT HURT AGAIN?

STILL, I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D HEAD BACK IN RIGHT AWAY.
WASN'T THAT RASH?

...THE FOUR OF US DEFEATED THE RED DRAGON!

A-ANDI?
WAS SHE...?

GASHI (GRAB)

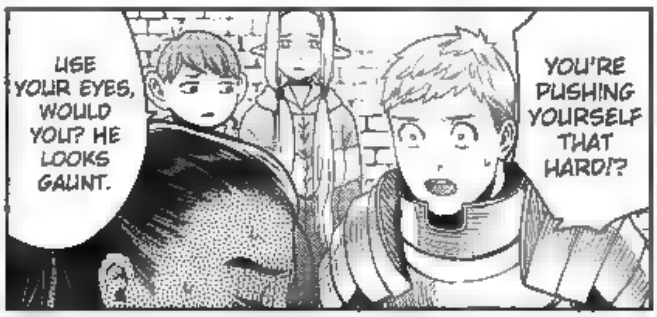
WHA...!?

THE RED DRAGON...?

YOUNG MAS-TER!

SHURO!
DOSAA (WHUMP)
どさあ

KURA (SWAY)
くらっ…


USE YOUR EYES, WOULD YOU? HE LOOKS GAUNT.
YOU'RE PUSHING YOURSELF THAT HARD!?

I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR...
YOU REALLY SHOULD EAT AND SLEEP, YOU KNOW.

I'M BEGGING YOU, PLEASE, YOU MUST EAT AND SLEEP PROPERLY.
YOU WON'T LAST LONG LIKE THIS...

GO ON AND EAT.
WHILE YOU DO, I'LL FILL YOU IN.

SLEEPING AND EATING...
...ARE WHAT ENABLE LIVING CREATURES TO DO WHAT THEY WANT TO DO.

YOU DON'T EAT MEALS "WHEN YOU HAVE TIME."
SHURO.

PAAAA (BEAM)

ALL RIGHT.
WOULD YOU FIX ME SOME-THING...
...MAI-ZURU?

.....

YEP!
TADE, YOU GO FETCH WATER.
A MEAL! PREPARE A MEAL!
HIEN, BENICHIDORI, YOU PREPARE THE RICE.
HIEN
BENICHIDORI
WE CAN'T HAVE YOU ADDING ODD THINGS TO THE FOOD.
...GUARD THE YOUNG MASTER.
ASEBI
ASEBI, YOU...
WAI!
WAI! CHATTER
MY, HOW CONSIDERATE.
I'LL START A FIRE FOR YOU.
I'LL LEAVE THAT TO YOU, THEN, DWARF.

HM. IN THAT CASE...

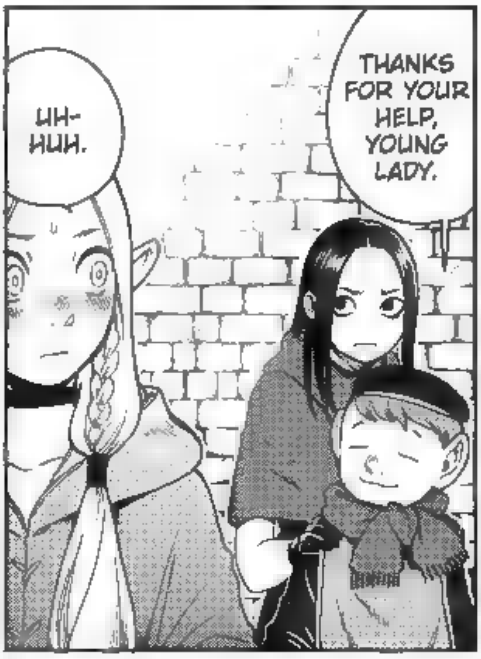
IT'S NOT GOOD TO HAVE SO MANY PEOPLE IN ONE PLACE.
IT ATTRACTS MONSTERS, TRIGGERS THE DUNGEON TO CHANGE...
LET'S SPLIT INTO THREE.

HMM...
THIS IS A BIG GROUP.

FROG WOMAN!!
GAAAN (SHOCK)
ガ

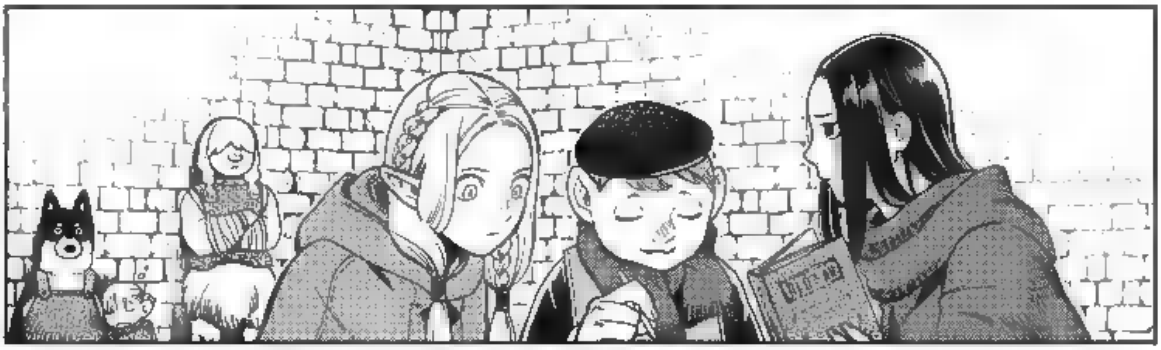
DWARF!
GNOME...

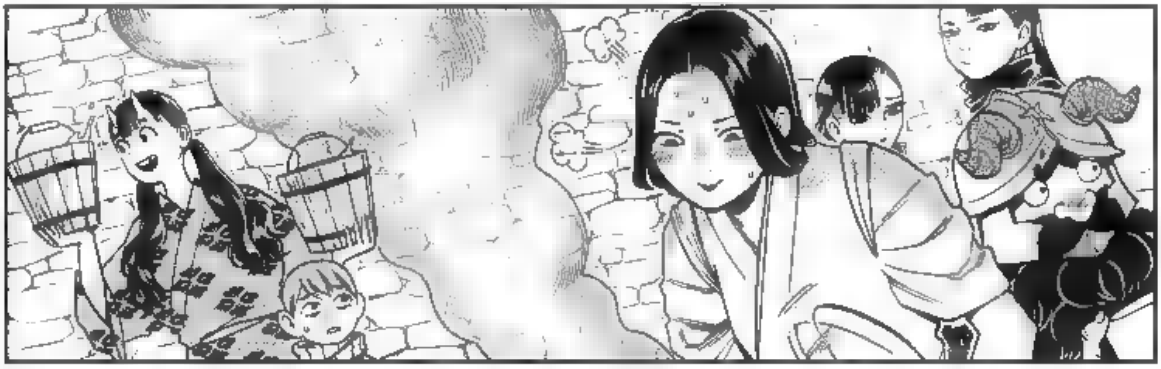
O-RIN!
"O"...?

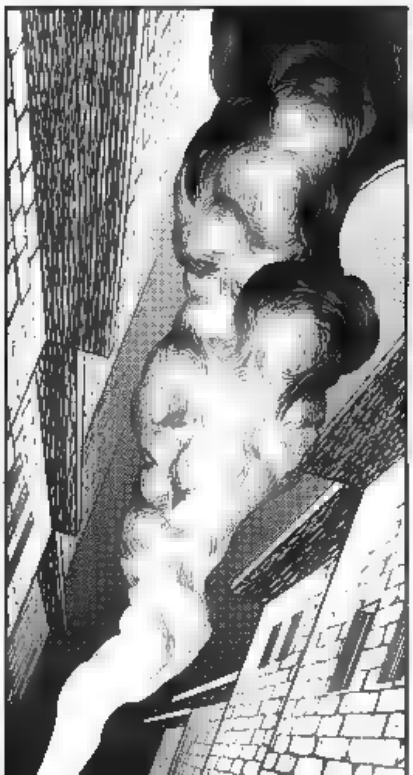

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, YOUNG LADY.
UH-HUH.

THOSE WHO CAN USE MAGIC, CAST A BARRIER HERE.
MAKE SURE NO MONSTERS APPROACH WHILE THE YOUNG MASTER IS AT TABLE.
SURE.

THANKS, KABRU.
I'LL HELP SUPPORT HIM.
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO.
OKAY THEN, SHURO.
LET'S GET A BIT MORE DISTANCE.
AHH, BUSY, SO VERY BUSY...
I'M GOING WITH YOU!
SEN-SHI!!
TA' (TMP)
MONSTERS!
AWESOME!
YUM!
MONSTERS.
EAT.
EAT THIS!
COOKING.
DIE.
IN THIS CASE...
...WHO'S MORE DANGER-OUS IF LEFT ALONE?

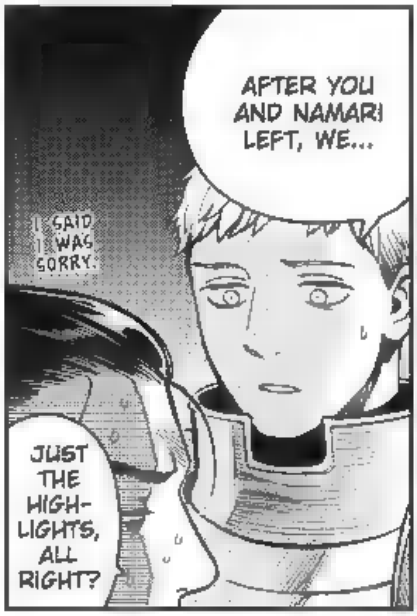






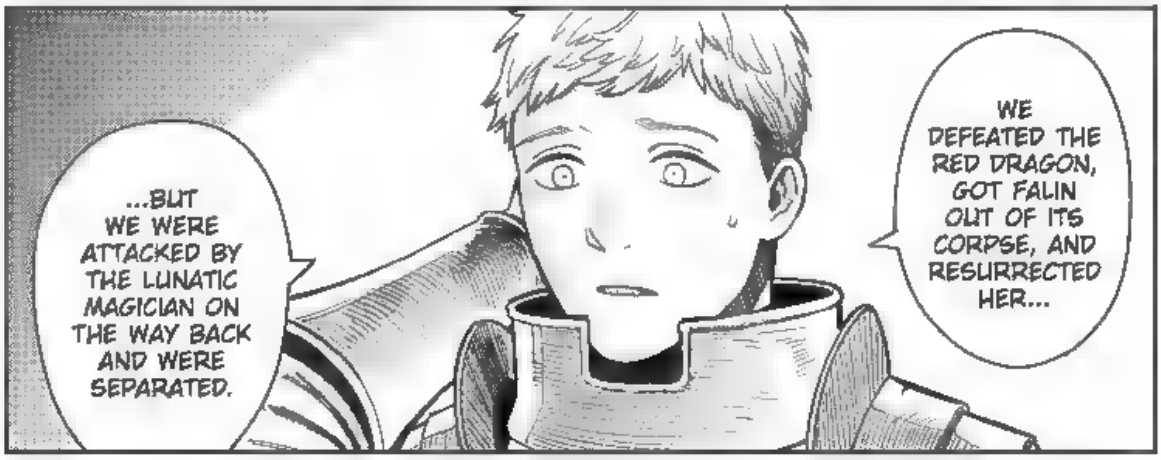
BARREL BATH!
I'LL HAVE HIM BATHE AFTER HE EATS.
AND SHAVE HIS WHISKERS, AND—TEND TO HIS HAIR...
HERE ...?

HEY, AREN'T YOU OVERDOING IT?
THE SMOKE...


AFTER YOU AND NAMARI LEFT, WE...
I SAID I WAS SORRY.
JUST THE HIGH-LIGHTS, ALL RIGHT?

NEVER MIND THAT, JUST TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED.

OKAY, SHURO. SIT HERE.


...BUT WE WERE ATTACKED BY THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN ON THE WAY BACK AND WERE SEPARATED.
WE DEFEATED THE RED DRAGON, GOT FALIN OUT OF ITS CORPSE, AND RESURRECTED HER...

WE COULDN'T DO ANY MORE ON OUR OWN...
...SO WE DECIDED TO GO TO THE SURFACE AND ASK FOR HELP, BUT THEN WE GOT LOST...

スゥ
GAZING THIS

UM. CAN I ASK...?
?

STILL, I'M GLAD WE RAN INTO YOU HERE!
WOULD YOU HELP US, SHURO!?

YOU STOLE FOOD FROM THEIR BELONGINGS.
DIE...
HUH?
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU SAW THE MAGICIAN?
DOKI (BADUMP)
ドキ
IT JUST SORT OF SEEMED LIKE IT...?

THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN IS THE ONE WHO BUILT THIS DUNGEON, RIGHT?
THERE ARE WHISPERED RUMORS OF A FIGURE WALKING THE DUNGEON, BUT ONE'S ACTUALLY SEEN THEM AND COME BACK.

HE'S BAD AT LYING AND HIDING THINGS.
IS THAT RIGHT ...?

HOW, SPECIFICALLY?

MAGIC ISN'T MY FIELD, SO I DON'T...
SAYING "BLACK MAGIC" WOULD BE BAD.
UM...

SWEH HEE! HEH!
AND HOW DID YOU GET AWAY?
WELL, MARCILLE... OH.
MY MAGICIAN COMPANION REALLY GAVE IT HER ALL, AND...

SFX: DOKI (BADMP)

THAT'S A TOUGH ONE!
OH. WOW.
WHAT'S THE BEST THING YOU'VE EATEN SO FAR?

WHEN YOU CONSIDER THESE MEMORIES.
NO, MAYBE THE RED DRAGON!
KELPIE... LIVING ARMOR...
YOU ATE THE DRAGON THAT ATE YOUR SISTER?

HA HA!
...COMPLETELY HILARIOUS!

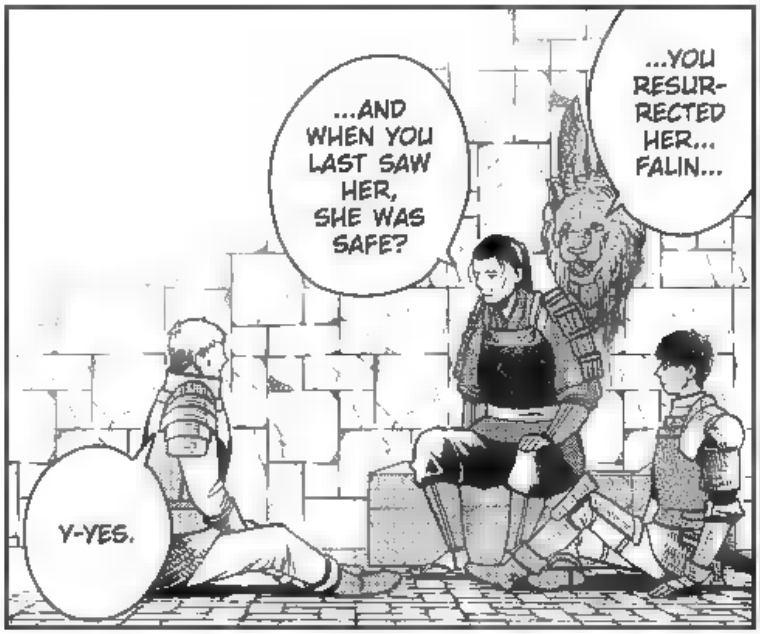
DUNGEON CLEANERS ARE EATING KENSUKE!
MOGU CMUNCH
MOGU
WHOA!!

MONSTERS...
PA (PAT)
PA
YOU JUST CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL.

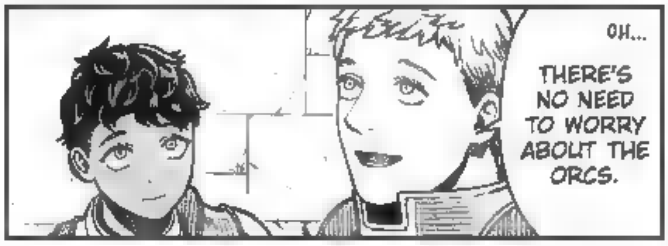
THEY'RE ACTUALLY MOLLUSKS IN SHELLS.
I'M GLAD YOU ASKED.
IS THERE ANYTHING EDIBLE ON LIVING ARMOR?
LOOK, THIS SWORD...

WHAT A NICE GUY...
NOT GOOD. THIS GUY WILL ACTUALLY BRING ME SOME.
I'LL HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE THAT HAPPENS .....

OH YES, PLEASE DO.
...WE'LL SERVE YOU SOME ANYTIME!
BY THE WAY, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED ■ EATING MONSTERS...


...YOU RESUR-RECTED HER... FALIN...
...AND WHEN YOU LAST SAW HER, SHE WAS SAFE?
Y-YES.

HAAA
SO...
AH


OH...
THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THE ORCS.

HUH?

ANY IDEA WHERE SHE IS?
THERE ARE MANY PLACES TO HIDE ON THIS LEVEL...
...BUT MOST OF THEM ARE ORC STRONG-HOLDS.

.....
.....

WORKING WITH THEM...
TECHNICALLY, ADVENTURERS HAVE A DUTY TO PUT THEM DOWN, BUT...

WHAT DID THEY TASTE LIKE?
NO, NO!!
WE DIDN'T EAT THEM!
DUE TO CERTAIN CIRCUM-STANCES, WE'RE CURRENTLY WORKING WITH THEM!

TAKEN AWAY!?
WHY!?

WE AREN'T SURE, BUT...
...FALIN MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN AWAY BY THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN.
IF SO, SHE'LL BE ON AN EVEN DEEPER LEVEL.

WELL, UH...
IF IT'S SHURO... IT SHOULD BE SAFE.

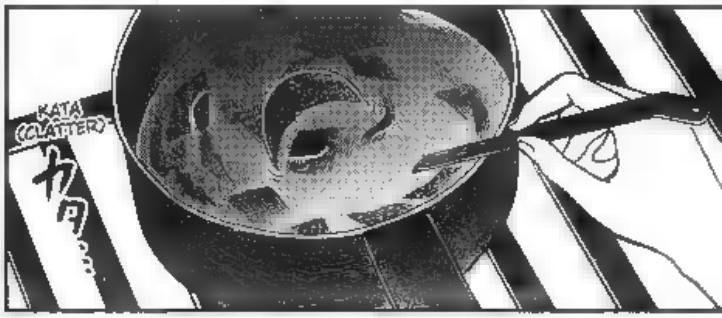
I'LL STEP OUTSIDE, THEN.
THANK YOU.
GO, ASEBI.

...I'D, UM...
I'D LIKE TO TALK TO HIM ALONE FOR A MINUTE.

...IN ORDER TO RESURRECT FALIN FROM THE STATE SHE WAS IN, WE...

AND...?
RIGHT.

MEALS HAVE TO DO MORE THAN JUST FILL YOUR BELLY.
I'M WITH YOU THERE.
YOU'RE QUITE SENSIBLE, DWARF.


KATA (CLATTER)
カタ

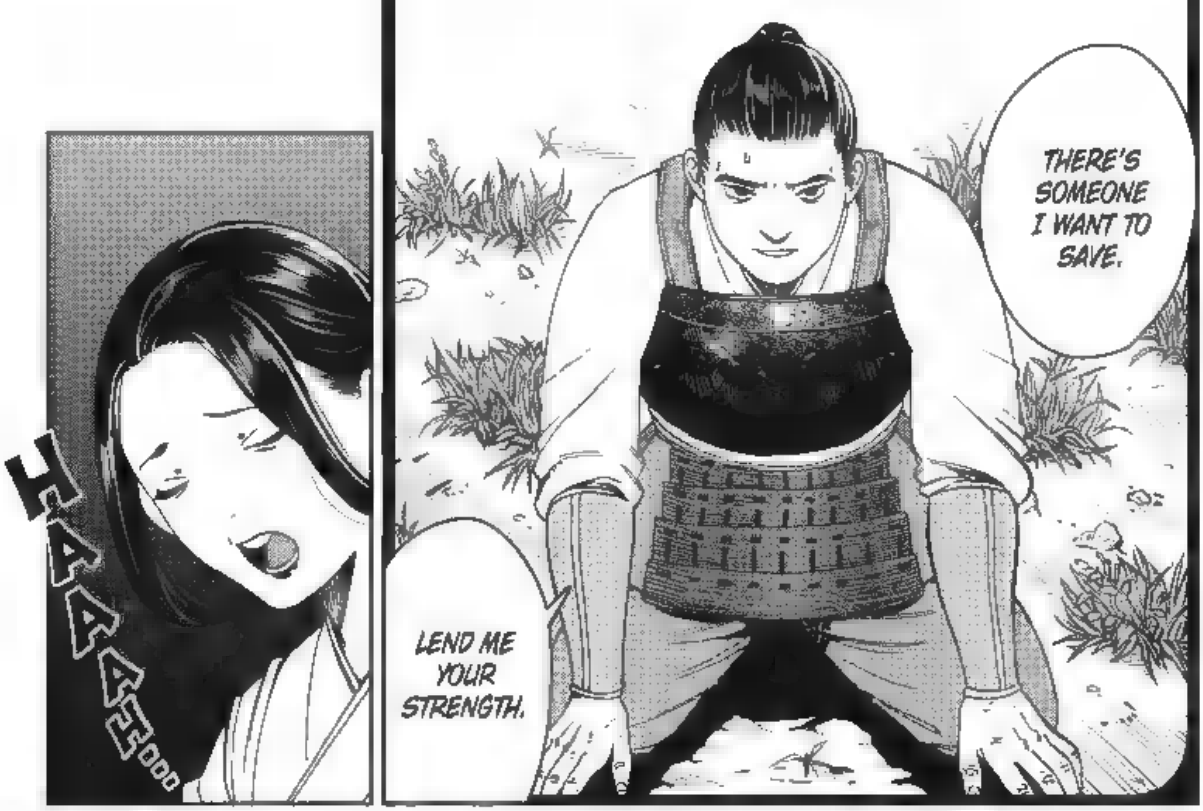
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH FIELD RATION PELLETS, BUT EVERY DAY...?
ONCE IN A WHILE, ONE SHOULD EAT HOT FOOD.

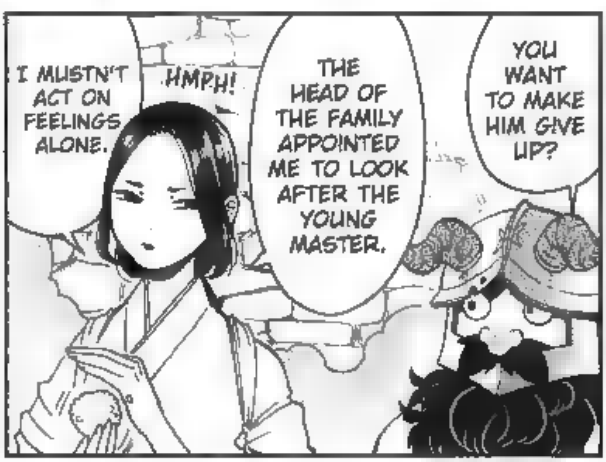
HE'D ALWAYS EAT PLENTY OF WHAT I MADE FOR HIM, THOUGH.
EVEN DURING MISSIONS, I WAS OFTEN DRAGGED BACK TO THE KITCHEN.

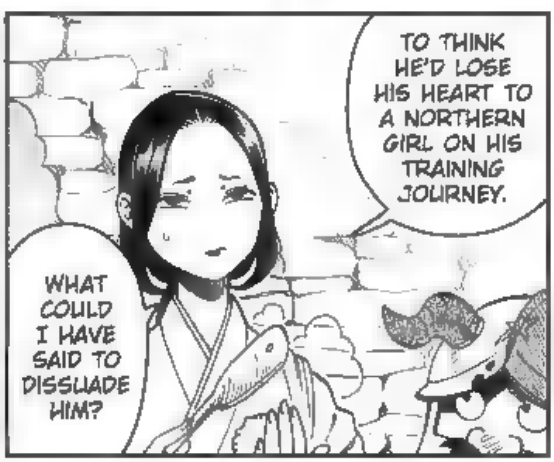
HERE SHE GOES AGAIN.
AS A CHILD, THE YOUNG MASTER WAS OFTEN SICK...
...AND HIS APPETITE WAS SMALL. EVERYONE [redacted] ABOUT HIM.

MAIZURU, PLEASE.

BUT HIS COMPLIANCE HAS ALWAYS MADE ME ANXIOUS.
THIS IS THE ONLY SELFISH REQUEST HE'S EVER MADE.


HAAAH...
LEND ME YOUR STRENGTH.
THERE'S SOMEONE I WANT TO SAVE.


I MUSTN'T ACT ON FEELINGS ALONE.
HMPH!
THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY APPOINTED ME TO LOOK AFTER THE YOUNG MASTER.
YOU WANT TO MAKE HIM GIVE UP?

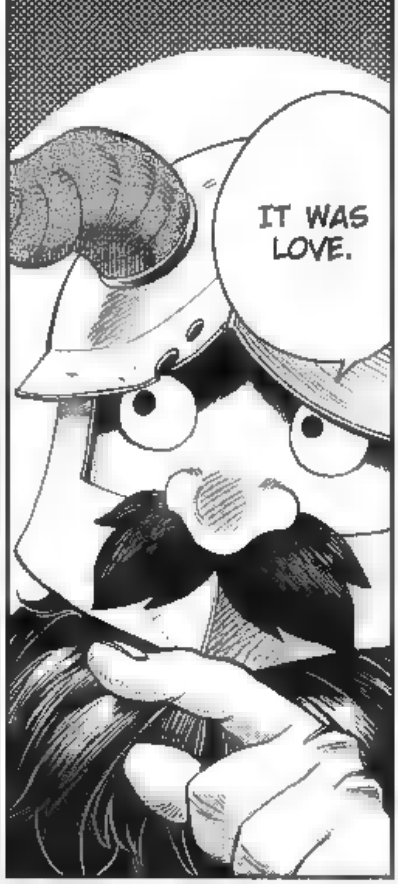

TO THINK HE'D LOSE HIS HEART TO A NORTHERN GIRL ON HIS TRAINING JOURNEY.
WHAT COULD I HAVE SAID TO DISSUADE HIM?

I KNOW WHAT IT WAS...
...THAT YOU PUT IN THERE.
WHY DID HE EAT HEARTILY WHEN YOU MADE HIS FOOD?

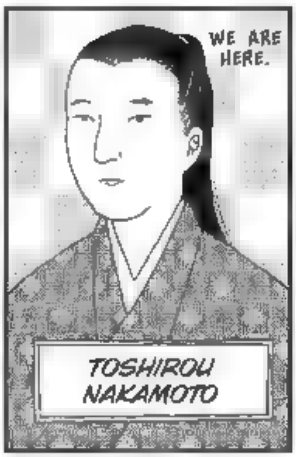
IN THAT CASE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW?
IF YOU HAVE PRESERVED RATIONS, THERE'S NO NEED TO GO TO THE TROUBLE OF COOKING.

FU-FU! WAS THAT AN ATTEMPT AT A PIQUANT REMARK?
OH! SIMPLY- BECAUSE IT WAS ABOUT FOOD?
PFFT!
WHAT?

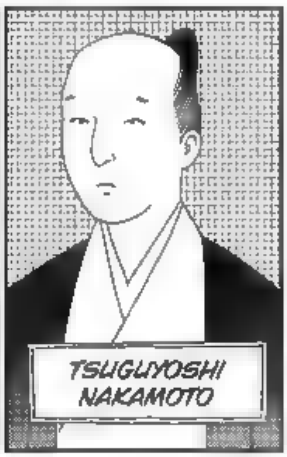
DEPENDING ON HOW THINGS TURN OUT...
...I MAY PUT IN A GOOD WORD FOR THEM.
BUT...
YES, IT MAY BE TOO LATE.


IT WAS LOVE.

FAJIROU NAKAMOTO

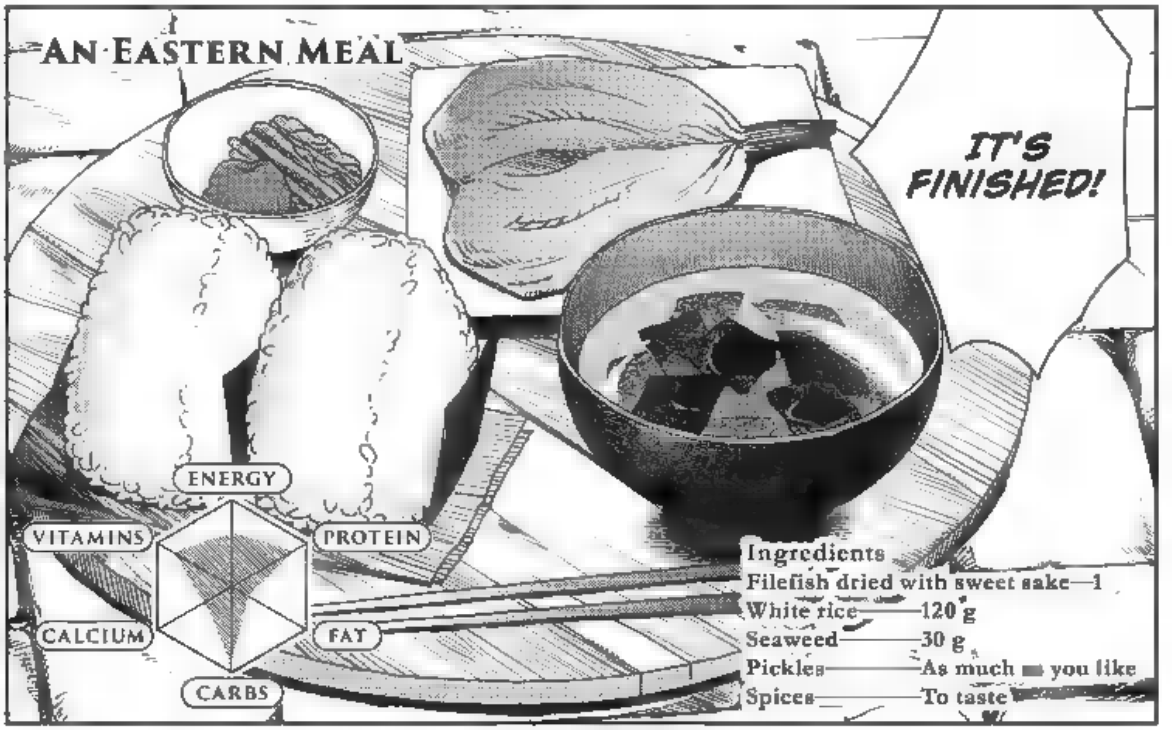

WE ARE HERE.
TOSHIROU NAKAMOTO

TOSHITSUGU NAKAMOTO


TSUGUYOSHI NAKAMOTO

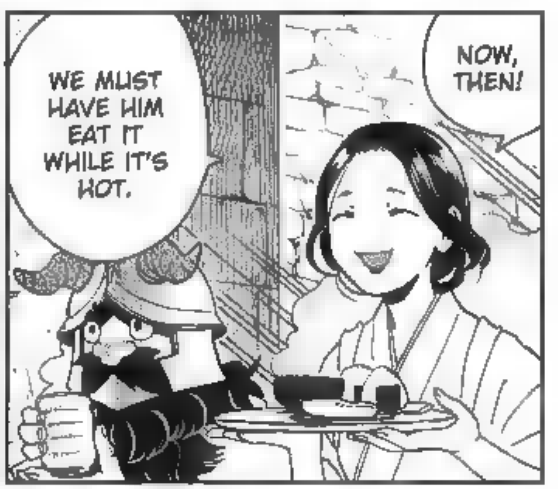
GOOD. THIS SHOULD DO.

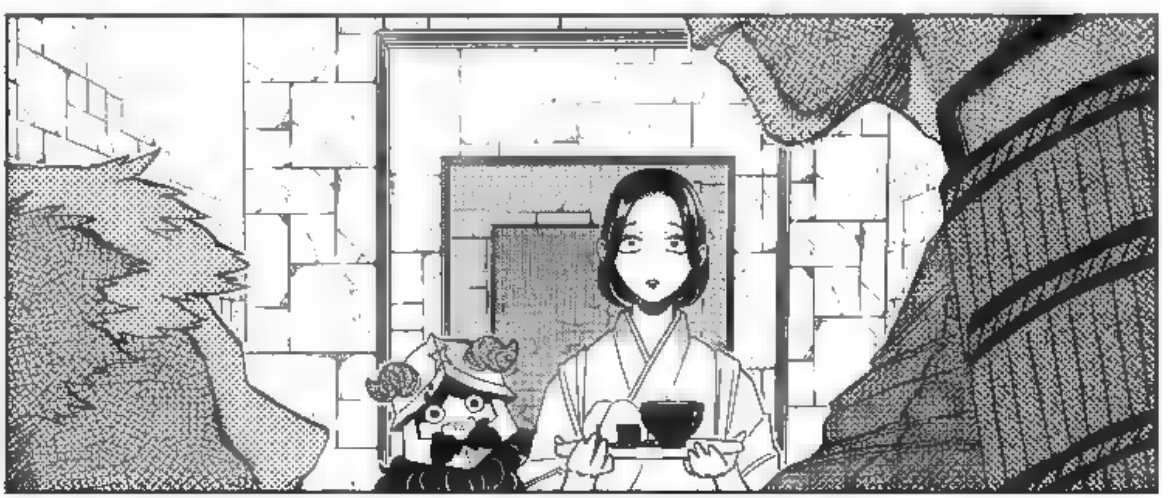
IT MIGHT BE A BIT OF A STRETCH.
THE PAINTING STYLE CHANGED!
NOOOOOO, THAT WOULDN'T WORK!!


AN EASTERN MEAL
IT'S FINISHED!
ENERGY
VITAMINS
PROTEIN
CALCIUM
FAT
CARBS
Ingredients
Filefish dried with sweet sake—1
White rice——120 g
Seaweed——30 g
Pickles——As much as you like
Spices——To taste

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?
YOUNG MASTER, I'M COMING IN.

WHY ARE YOU TWO OUT HERE?
HM?
THEY WANTED TO TALK IN PRIVATE.


WE MUST HAVE HIM EAT IT WHILE IT'S HOT.
NOW, THEN!



YOUNG MASTER !?
BA (FLING)
WHAT ON EARTH IS...!?
PASHI (SNATCH)
.....
ガ
GARAN (CLATTER)

I'M SORRY. WE DON'T KNOW...
TELL ME! WHAT HAP-PENED!?

...
DID THAT MAN DO SOME-THING!?

HE RESURRECTED A WOMAN WITH MONSTER FLESH AND BLOOD USING BLACK MAGIC.
BLACK MAGIC.

BLACK ...

THE REASON AND DEGREE DON'T MATTER.
ALL WHO INVOLVE THEMSELVES WITH BLACK MAGIC...
...ARE CRIMINALS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER.

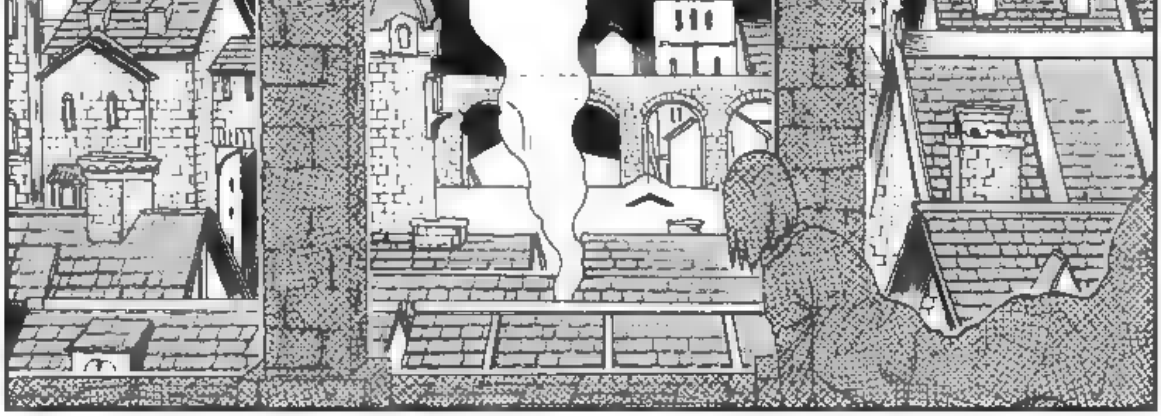
WHY WOULD YOU...?
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE?

IF THE ELVES OF THE WEST FIND OUT...
...WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HER...?
THEY'RE LOCKED AWAY IN A LIGHTLESS PLACE UNTIL DEATH...
...AND EVEN THEIR CORPSES AREN'T RETURNED.

.....

THAT'S IF THE STORY LEAVES THE DUNGEON.
AND YOU WON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THIS...
...WILL YOU?

PITA (FREEZE)
WE HAD NO OTHER OPTIONS.
PLEASE UNDER-STAND, SHURO.
IF THIS KEEPS UP, I'LL GET CAUGHT IN THEIR FIGHT AND DIE, HUH?
WHOA...
THAT'S UGLIER THAN ANYTHING I WAS EXPECT-ING.
BLACK MAGIC!
WHAT DO I DO WITH THIS?



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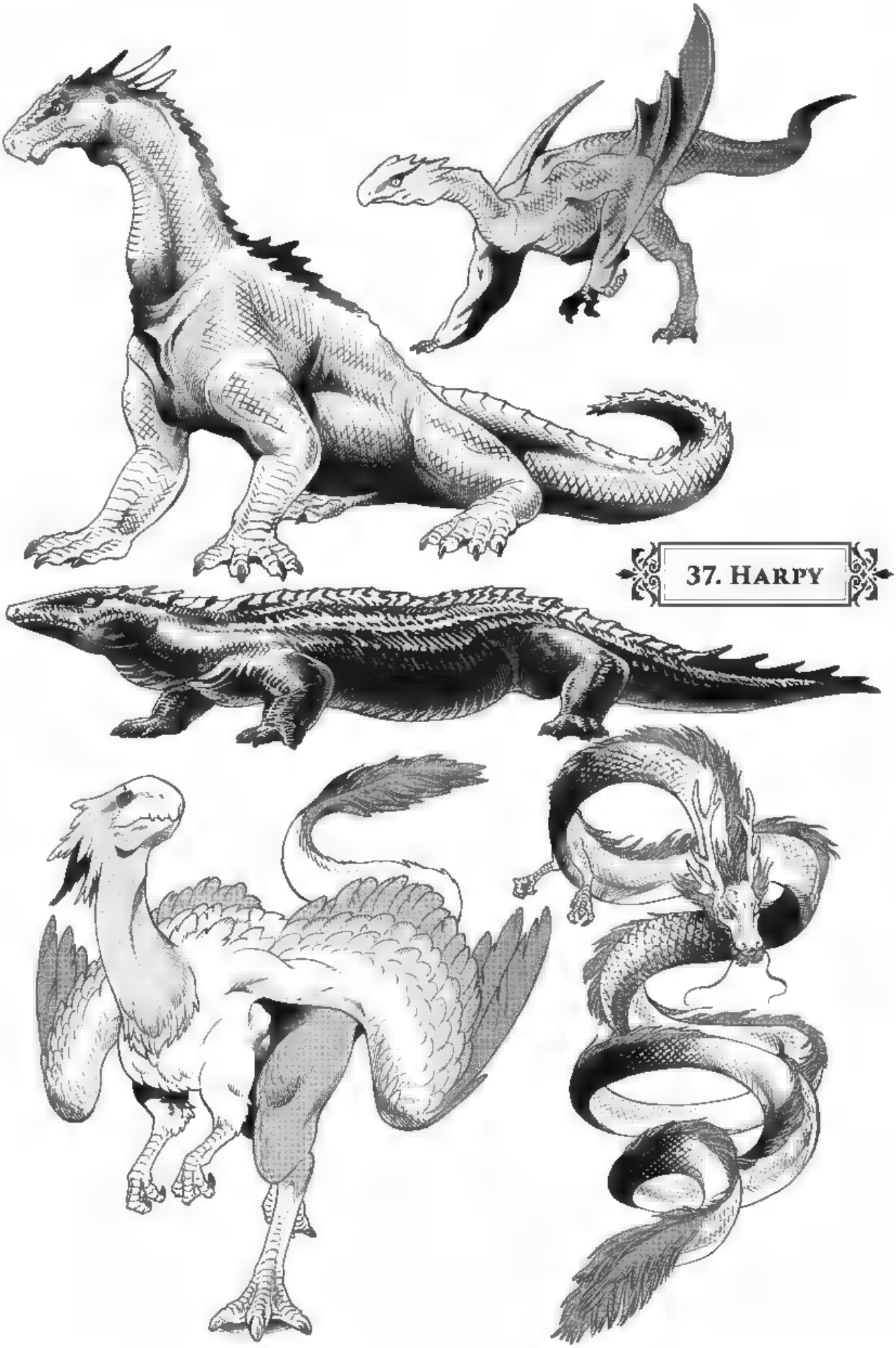
LORD DELGAL...

HAVE TO FIND...
CHAPTER 36: THE END



37. Harpy

WOW... SERIOUSLY.

WAS SHE WORTH GOING TO SUCH LENGTHS TO REVIVE?
IT DOESN'T GET MORE ABOMINABLE THAN BLACK MAGIC.

FOR HER SAKE TOO, JUST LETTING HER DIE WOULD HAVE—
ENOUGH !!

USING DUBIOUS METHODS LIKE THAT FOR A RESURRECTION...
IT'S ALL RISK, NO BENEFIT.

IT'S NO WONDER YOU'RE ANGRY, SHURO.

DEEP DOWN, SHURO, YOU MUST KNOW.
IN THAT SITUATION...
...WOULD YOU HAVE DONE THE SAME THING?

WHEW.
...I'M SORRY.

I SEE... WHAT YOU'RE GETTING AT.
だらん
DARAN (SLUMP)
DON'T SAY ANY MORE.

AT ANY RATE...

LOOK! LOOK! IT'S A MONSTER SWORD!! IT'S REALLY TASTY.
MUKAAA (RAGE)
...MAYBE THE RED DRAGON.
WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE MEMORIES...
WE'VE BEEN EATING MONSTERS!
WORKING WITH THE ORCS.
WE USED BLACK MAGIC. BUT YOU'LL KEEP QUIET ABOUT IT FOR US, RIGHT, SHURO?

I KNOW. I KNOW, BUT...
...HIS ATTITUDE IS JUST TOO...

I CAN'T HELP YOU.

...I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
I DON'T EVEN WANT TO.

A GROUP OF MONSTERS CHARGED THE COOKING TEAM...
WE'VE GOT TROUBLE.

PATA
PATA (PATTER)
LAIOS! SEN-SHI!

...WHAT DID YOU DO?
I TOLD HIM EVERY-THING.

ZA (SHUF)
AH!

HE REALLY WAS, WASN'T HE?
HE'S OBVIOUSLY THE ABSOLUTE WORST ONE TO TELL!!
I THOUGHT SHURO WOULD UNDER-STAND.

EVERY-THING!!?

I RESPECT HIM.

DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU.
HE'S A LITTLE TIRED TOO.

WAIT, IS THIS MY FAULT? DID I CHOOSE WRONG? HUH??

I ONLY KNOW MY HOMELAND AND THIS ISLAND...
...BUT HE TOLD ME ABOUT OTHER COUNTRIES.
I'VE LOST COUNT OF HOW MANY TIMES HE'S SAVED ME ON ADVENTURES.
SHURO WAS ALWAYS COOL-HEADED AND SMART.

AH HA HA...
I'LL BE SAD IF OUR FRIENDSHIP ENDS LIKE THIS, BUT...
!

.....

IF IT MADE HIM BLOW UP LIKE THAT...
...WHAT I DID MUST HAVE BEEN PRETTY BAD.

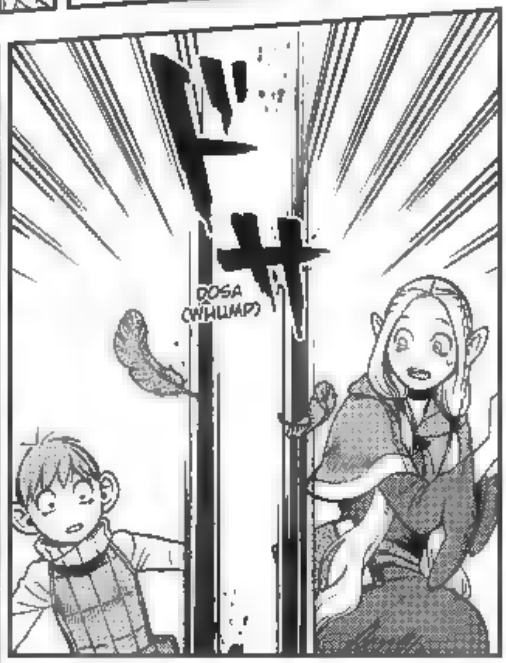
AAAH HA HA
HWWWWWWW
GYA HA HA HA HA
HEEE!
HEE!
HEEEE!
HAR-PIES!!
GHK!
HA HA HA
AH
GYA HA HA
TO (HOP)
THIS IS GOING NO-WHERE.
LET'S GO, YOU THREE.
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM QUICKLY.
YES, M...
KEE HEE HEE HEE
HYA HA HA
AHHH HA! HA! HA!
ARGH...
TAKE THAT !!
DO (WHUP)
SURURI (SWOOP)

SHURO'S FURIOUS.
I BET...
AND NOW THEY LOOK LIKE THAT!?
HUH!?
LAIOS TOLD SHURO EVERYTHING.
...?

UWAAA!!

I KNOW.
WHAT DO WE DO? IF THE STORY GETS TO THE SURFACE, WE'LL BE...
I KNOW, BUT...

IT LOOKS LIKE THE NINJAS ARE DOING JUST FINE.
ピク PIKU
ピク PIKU (TWITCH)


ドサ
DOSA (WHUMP)

NIKO (SMILE)
...AND THAT CURLY-HAIRED GUY.
FOUR, CURRENTLY.
HISO (WHISPER)
HISO
FOR NOW, WHO ELSE KNOWS?
SHURO, TWO OF HIS ATTENDANT WOMEN...
NO IDEA.
THE FISH-MEN GOT THEM TOO.
MAYBE HE'S LOOKING FOR WHOEVER IT WAS THAT STOLE THEIR TROPHIES AND FOOD?
...THE GROUP THE TREASURE INSECTS WIPED OUT, RIGHT?
WHY IS HE HERE!?
DOSA (WHUMP)
URK...
HE'S ONE OF THE...
THE BIGGER ISSUE IS THAT BLACK MAGIC.
JUST LEAVE IT. THEY'LL NEVER KNOW.
YOU'RE GOING TO ADMIT THAT HALF THAT TREASURE WAS REAL, AND WE DID STEAL THEIR FOOD!?
THERE'S NO PROOF.
THE TROPHIES WERE TREASURE INSECTS, AND THE FOOD WAS SOAKED AND RUINED, SO WE...
W-WE HAVE TO CLEAR THAT UP!
DON'T, YOU IDIOT!

AND THAT'S "ANCIENT" MAGIC.
THE DUNGEON CLEANERS GOT RID OF THE MAGIC CIRCLE.
IF THEY CHECKED FALIN'S BODY AND MY STAFF VERY CAREFULLY, WE MIGHT ■ ■ TROUBLE, BUT I THINK THAT'S IT.

I DUNNO ABOUT THE OTHERS, THOUGH.
BY THE WAY...
...HOW MUCH PROOF IS LEFT THAT YOU USED BLACK MAGIC?

SHURO'S MAD, BUT THAT'S NOT A PROBLEM.
WHAT HE'S MAD ABOUT IS THAT WE PUT FALIN IN DANGER.
DOSA (WHUMP)

DOSA (WHUMP)

WAIT, WAIT! JUST SO YOU KNOW...
THEN BURN THE STAFF RIGHT NOW!
...IF THEY ALREADY SUSPECT US THAT MUCH, IT'LL BE TOO LATE NO MATTER WHAT WE—

HUH...?

WAAH!
LOOK! OVER THERE!!
WHAT'S THAT MONSTER?
A HARPY? NO...

HUH?
...HUH?
WHAT?

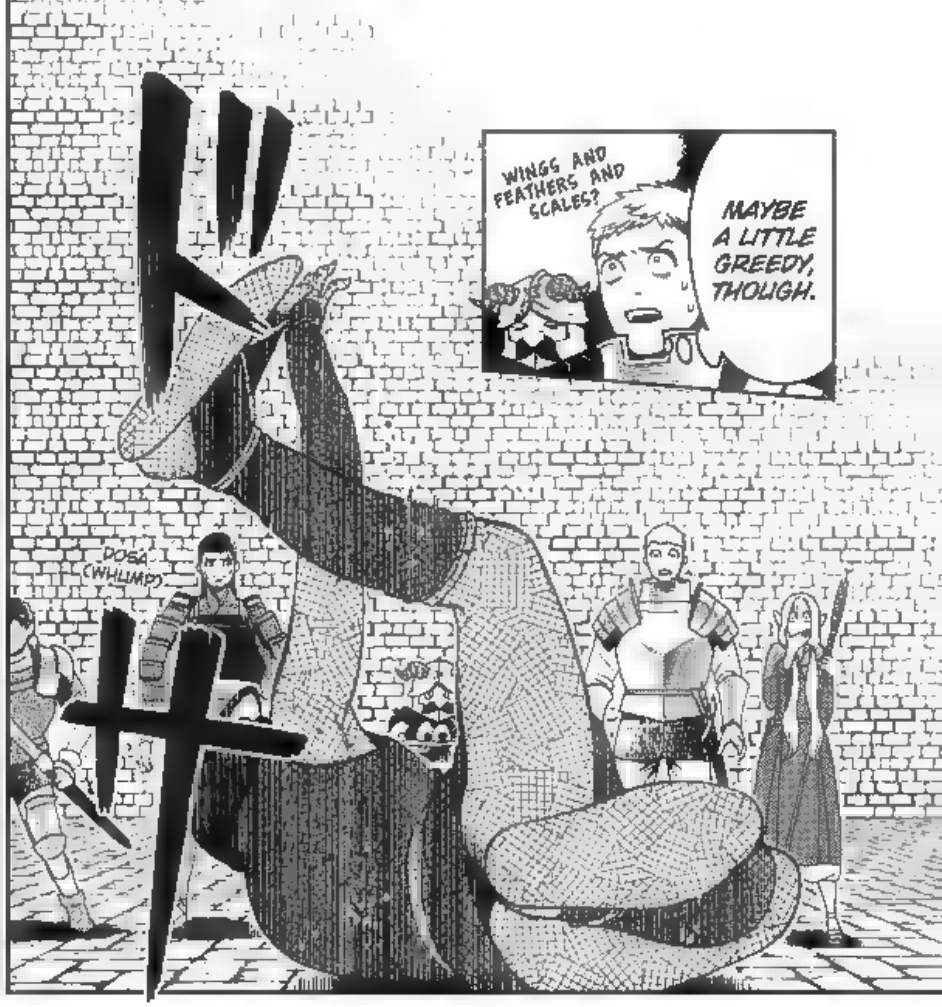
IT CAN'T BE.
NO...
WHAT IS THAT!?

FAL...

NO WAY.
NO, NO, NO WAY. WHY?

IT'S INCREDIBLY COOL...

HOLM! RIN!
PREPARE FOR BATTLE!
AH!
R-RIGHT.


WINGS AND FEATHERS AND SCALES?
MAYBE A LITTLE GREEDY, THOUGH.
DOSA (WHUMP)

GIVE AN ORDER!
LAIOS, SHURO, WHAT DO WE DO!?
.....

MAR-CILLE, DON'T.
FALIN! DO YOU REC-OGNIZE ME!?
FALIN!

RGH.
DWEEEEH?

RESTRAIN HER!
INUTADE! DON'T HURT HER!

AH!

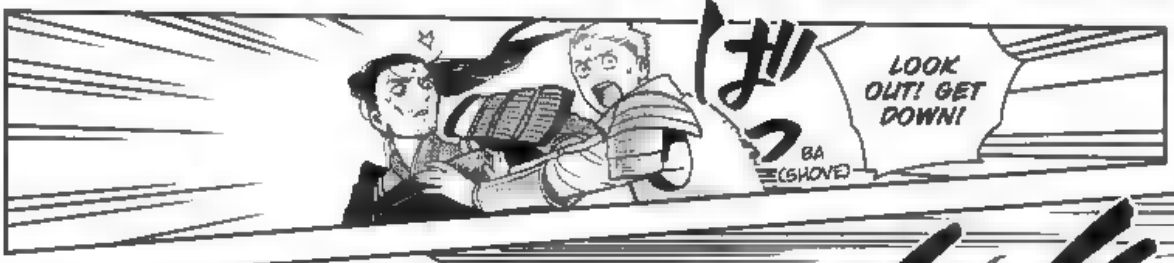
BYUO (FOOM)
YOU MUSTN'T, YOUNG MASTER.
RUN...
UGHK!
GUN (YANK)
ZUN (WHUD)
SFX: KUSHA (SPLITCH)
FUWA (FLOAT)

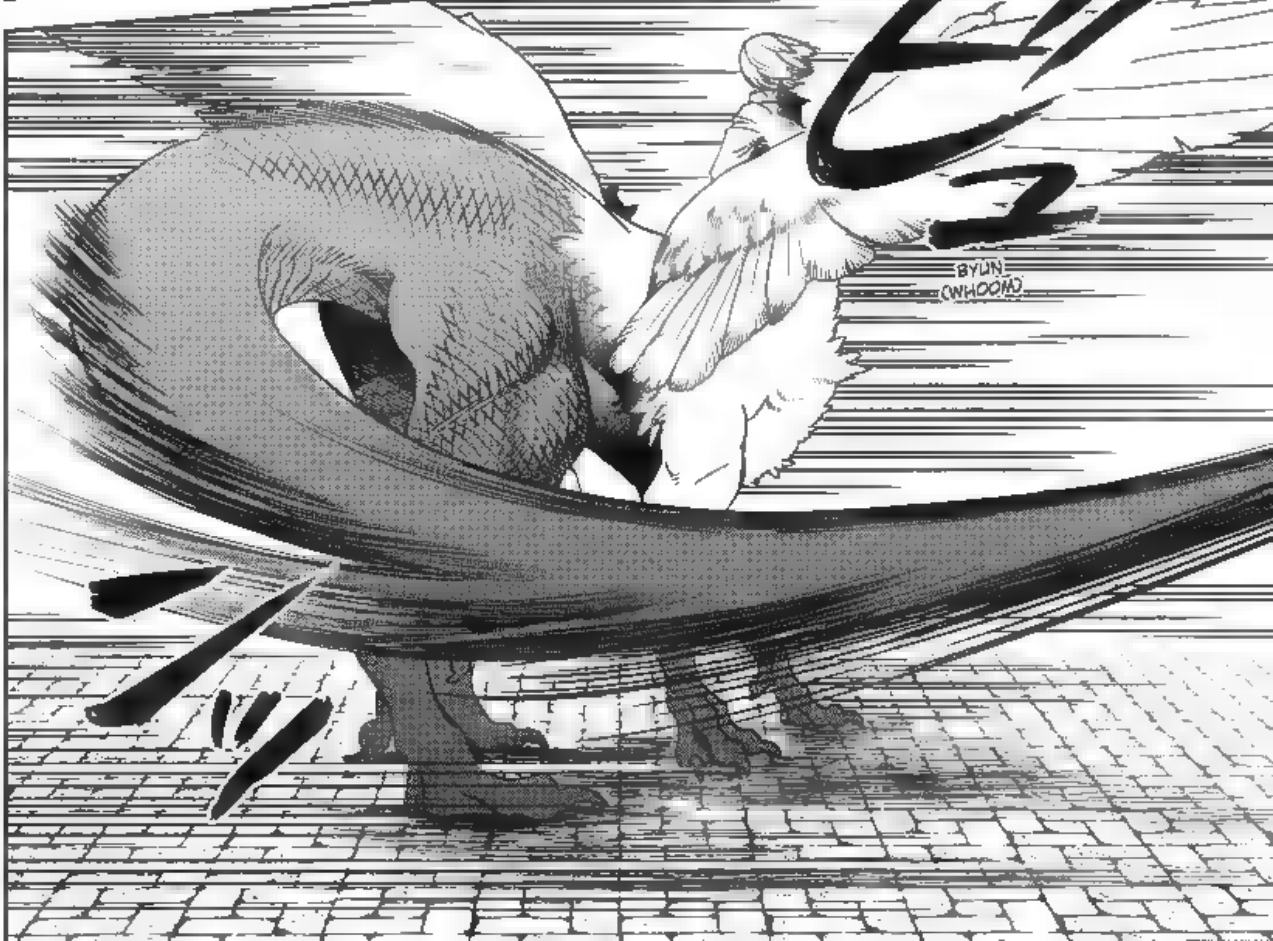
URAAA!
GRRRA!
BA (LEAP)
GUN (SWING)

GO (THUNK)
DOSU (WHUD)
GABURI (CHOMP)
NWAAH !!
CATCH HER, BUT DON'T HURT HER.
PA (DROP)
UMM, CATCH HER.
DOTA
DOTA
CATCH HER.
DOTA (TROMP)

YAAAAH!

ギロ
GIRO
(GLARE)


ばっ
BA
(SHOVE)
LOOK OUT! GET DOWN!

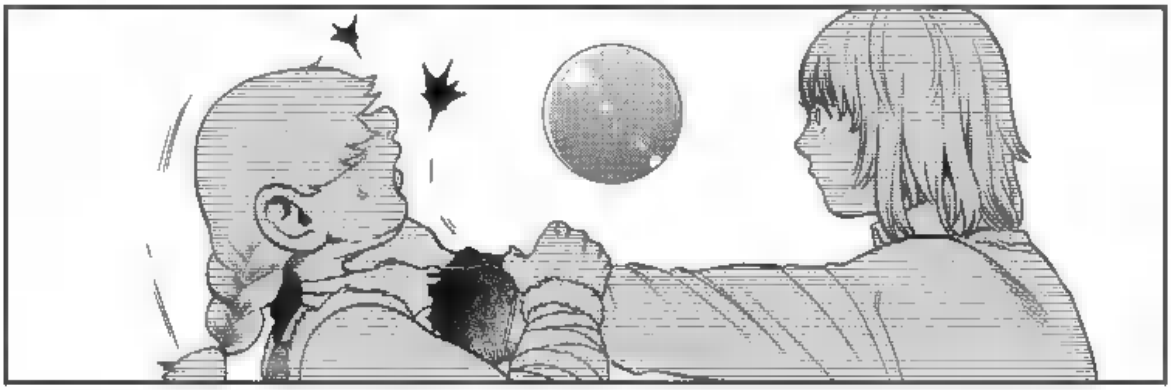

ビュン
BYUN
(WHOOSH)

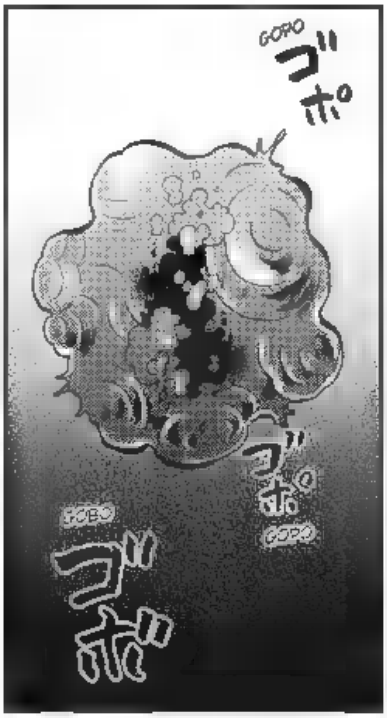
GHK...
DON (BOOM)
ぴっ
PI (PLIK)
パラ
PARA (RUMBLE)
トク
TOKU
トク
TOKU
トク
TOKU (BLUP)
PASHA (SPLISH)
COME ON OUT.
ALL RIGHT ...
UH.
UH-HUH...
CAN YOU DO IT, HOLM?

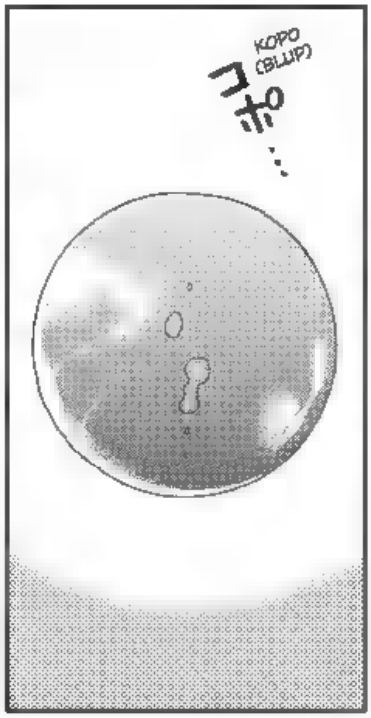
GUN
(YANK)

SO
(PAT)

GU
(STRAIND
GUGU




GOPO
GOPO
GOPO
GOPO


KOPO
(BLUP)

CHUN (ZZZZIP)
TCH!
A-ARE YOU CONTROLLING THAT?
PLEASE MAKE IT STOP.
SHE'S JUST CONFUSED, THAT'S ALL.
FALIN!!
U... UNDINE...

THAT ISN'T "HER."
IT'S JUST...
...A MONSTER!

BIKU
(FLINCH)

ENOUGH.
IF IT'S TO PROTECT SOMEONE PRECIOUS TO YOU...
...YOU DON'T CARE HOW MANY PEOPLE DIE?

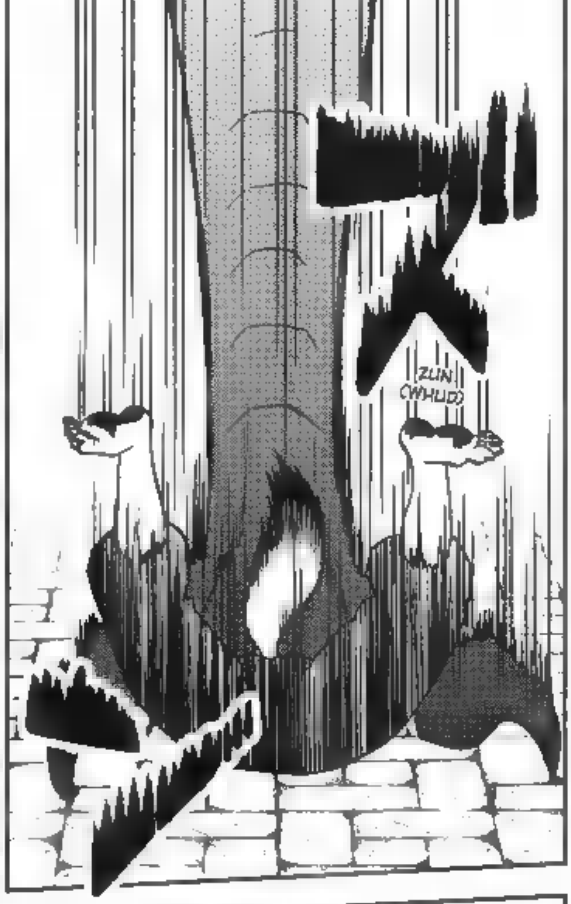
GIRL!
BIB

TOPUN
(SPLUNK)

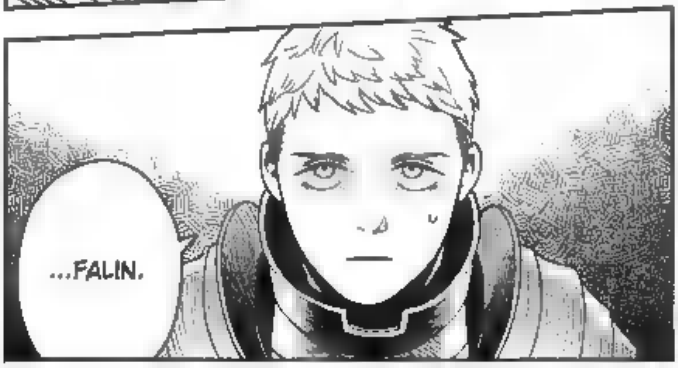
SHURURU
(SHWIRL)

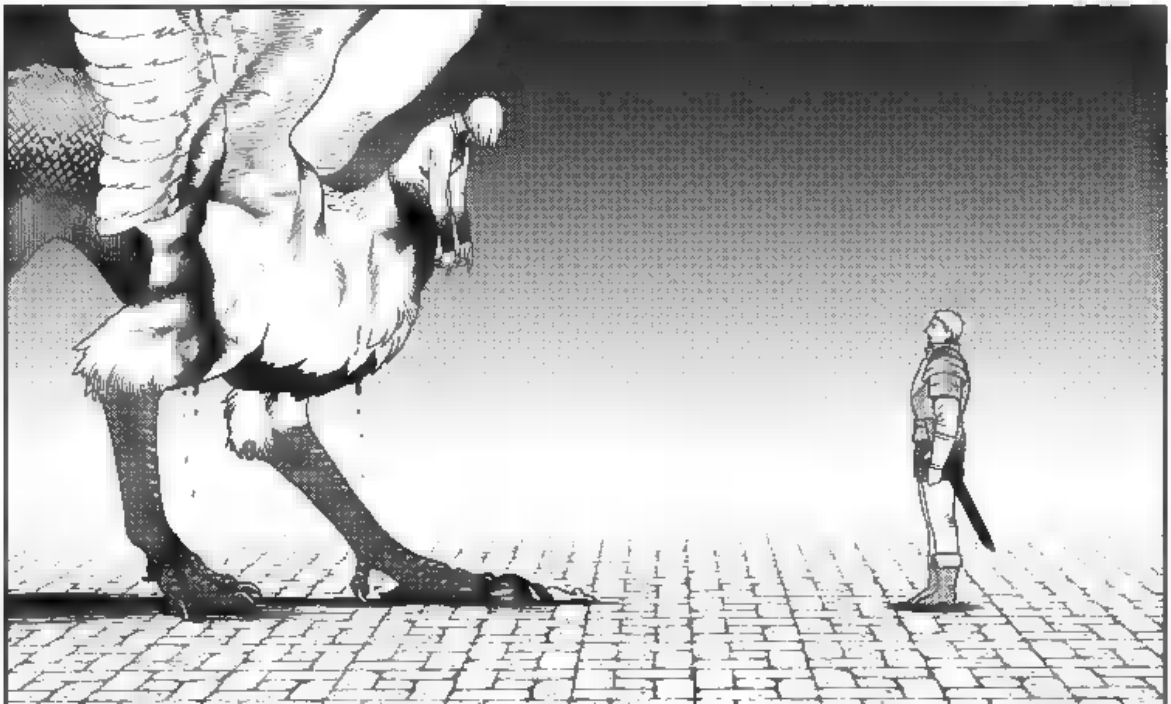
BASHA (SPLASH)
JYU (SIZZLE)
PAN (BANG)
OH, MARILLIER ...
IT CAN USE MAGIC TOO?
ZU (DRAG)
R R R
R
G R R
SO (REACH)
G R R R
GABU (CHOMP)

DON'T, IDIOT! JUST HIDE!
WAAH! KURO!


ZLIN (WHUD)

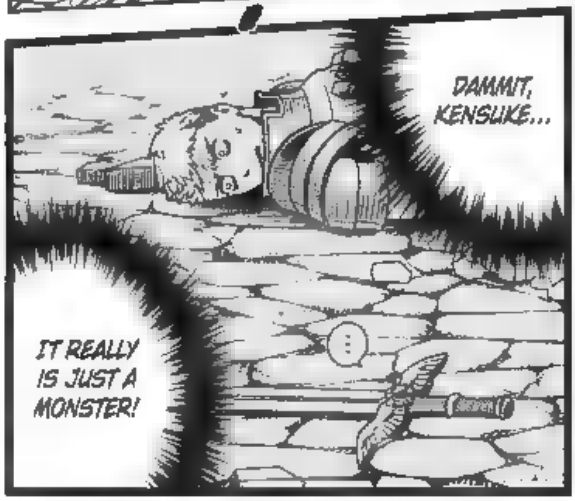
RIN. GO.
ZA (SHF)


...FALIN.



BA (RAISE)
OUT OF THE WAY!!
BACHI (CRACKLE)
BACHII

ZUN (WHIZ)

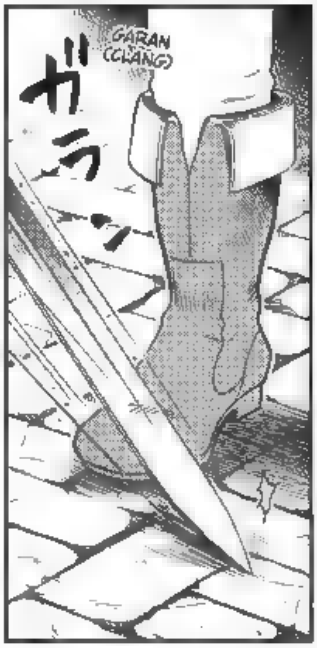

DAMMIT, KENSUKE...
IT REALLY IS JUST A MONSTER!

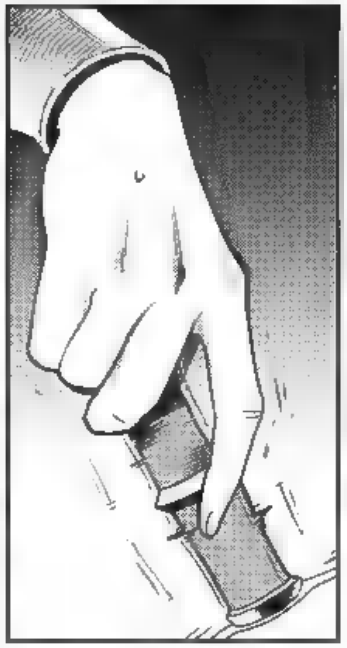
I THINK MAKING A LIFE PRESERVER WITH ITS ORGANS WOULD BE MORE USEFUL.
MONSTERS ARE DANGEROUS.

カタ
KATA (RATTLE)

I'M SORRY, FALIN.
IF I COULD TRADE PLACES WITH YOU, I WOULD.

BIG BROTHER LAIOS.


ガラン
GARAN (CLANG)



ビクッ
BIKU (FLINCH)

FURA (SWAY)
フラ
GA (SLASH)
ガッ
BUSHU (SPLURT)
ブシュ
!!
FALIN!!

38. Chimera

HEART!
DO
DO (STAB)
LUNG!
KIDNEY!
DO
ゴボ
GOBO
ゴボ
GOBO
ゴボ
GOBO (BLUP)
ゲ
GUI (GRAB)
HFF!
HAFF!

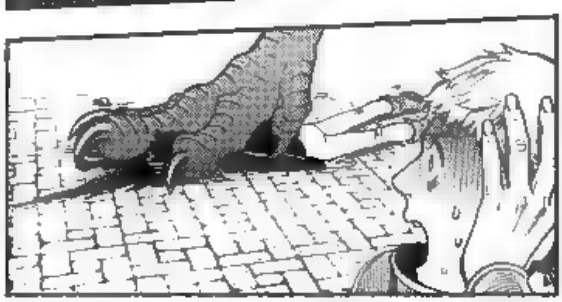
GURUN (FLIP)
!! GO (WHUD)
GHAK ...!
I'M DEAD—
!!! GUWA (LUNGE)

(SHCONK)
GU (TWIST)
I'M SORRY I HESITATED.
CAN YOU STAND!?
WHAT YOU SAID WAS RIGHT.

FOR NOW, WE NEED TO GET AWAY FROM HERE.

MY SISTER'S SOUL IS PROBABLY UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE LORD OF THE DUNGEON.
IF WE KILL HER, THOUGH, THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN WILL APPEAR AGAIN.

THAT—

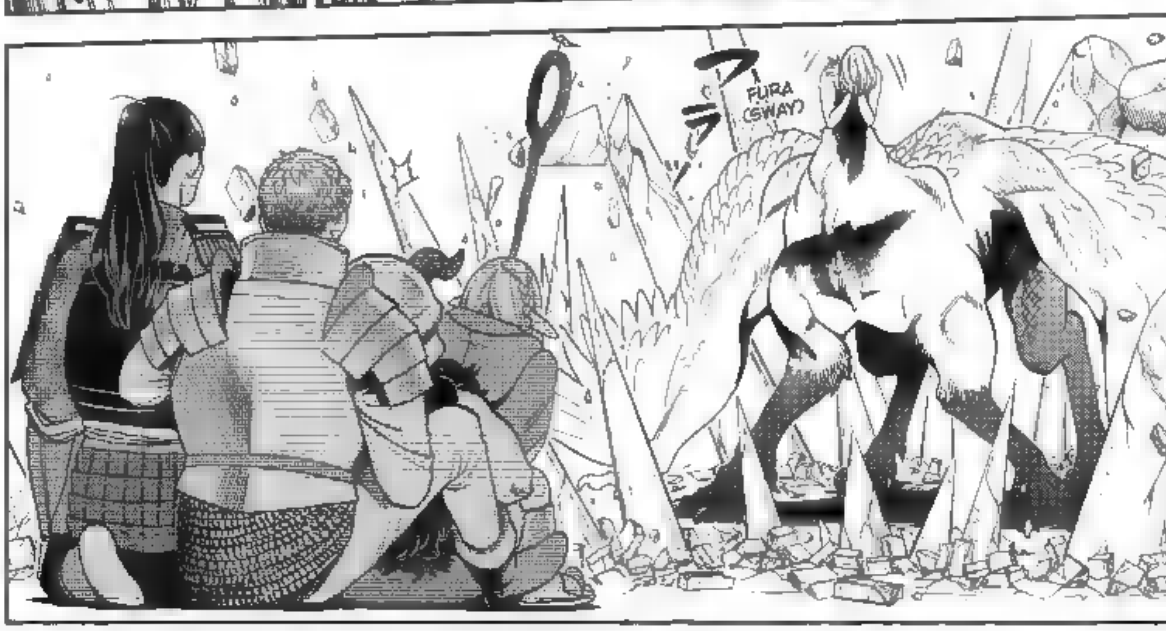


GAN (CLANG)
UNGH!
ZUZAZA (SKID)

ビリ
BI (RIP)
WAIT JUST A...!
HAAH...
HWOO...
AAAA

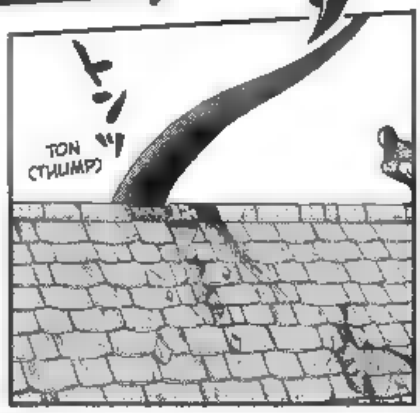
KILL! (CLEAN)
MON-STER!
(BACH! (KRAK!)
THAT SPELL ...!
EVERY-ONE, STAY NEAR ME!
DO (FOOM)

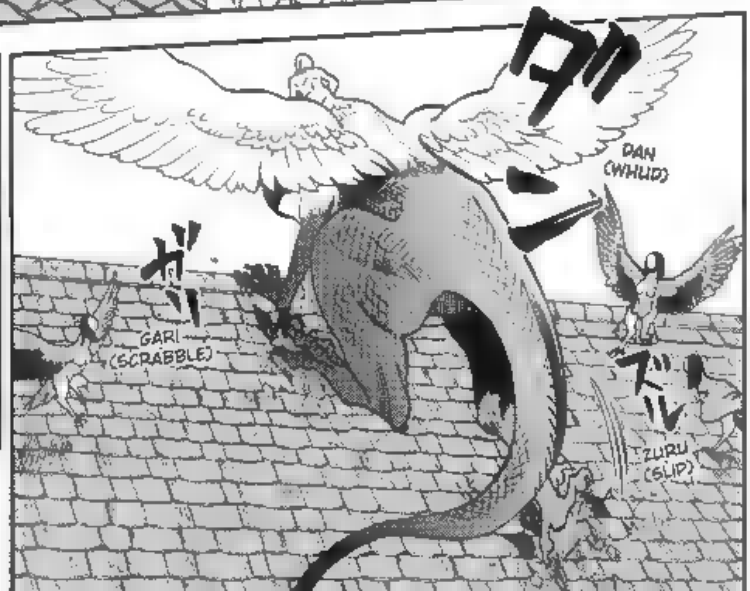
ボゴ
BOGO (GRUNK)
ESSIET!


フラ
FURA (SWAY)

DO
(LUNGE)
AGH!

BA
(LEAP)


TON
(THUMP)


DAN
(WHUP)
GARI
(SCRABBLE)
ZURU
(SLIP)

KARAN (TAKK)

AND THE DEAD... UM...WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

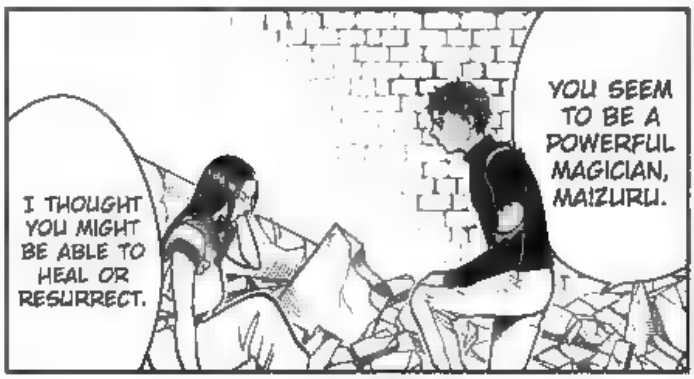
SHE MIGHT COME BACK.
LET'S GET THE WOUNDED INSIDE THE BARRIER.

AH!

A GNOME FROM A GNOME...
NO, NO. DON'T MOVE THEM.
SHOULD WE PUT ALL THE CORPSES TOGETHER?
WE CAN'T WASTE A DROP OF THE BLOOD THEY SHED.

BORO (CRUMBLE)
...I'LL REVIVE THEM.
I CAN'T MANAGE ALL OF THEM, BUT...

HAAH...
TOKO (TUP)
トコ
トコ
TOKO
もぞ
MOZO (RUSTLE)
NH...
ボコ
BOKO (BLUP)
ボコッ
BOKO
WAIT. IF YOU'RE REVIVING PEOPLE, DO HER FIRST.
KOFF!
ALL RIGHT. NEXT IS...
GABA (BOLT)
ガバ
THE MON-STER !?
SHE RAN AWAY. IT'S OKAY NOW.


YOU SEEM TO BE A POWERFUL MAGICIAN, MAIZURU.
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO HEAL OR RESURRECT.

...WHY ME?

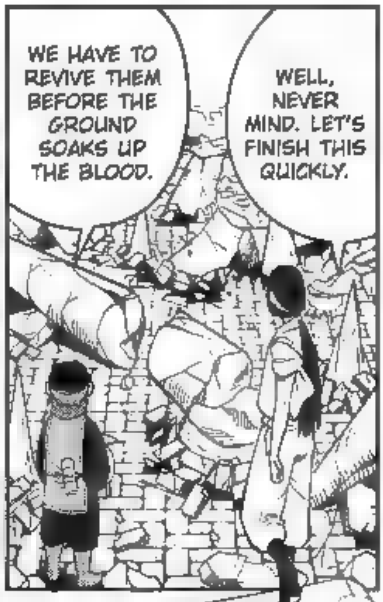
HE CAN'T TREAT ALL OF THEM, YOU SEE.
HER MAKEUP CAME OFF.

SO NOW I OWE YOU, HM?
I IMAGINE YOU'RE AFTER A DIFFERENT SPELL.

YOU TOOK CARE OF US ON THE WAY HERE, SO THIS MUST BE NOTHING.

GU (JERK)
DON'T.

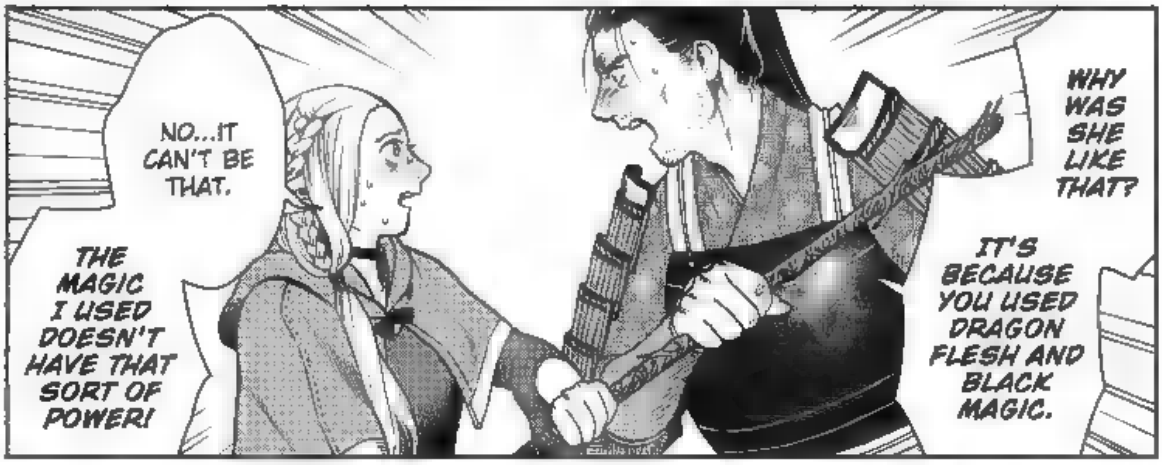
UM...
IF IT'S A SIMPLE RESUR-RECTION, I COULD...


WE HAVE TO REVIVE THEM BEFORE THE GROUND SOAKS UP THE BLOOD.
WELL, NEVER MIND. LET'S FINISH THIS QUICKLY.

I-I WOULDN'T USE ANYTHING LIKE...

GUN (TUG)
THEN WHAT WAS THAT THING!?

DON'T YOU TOUCH THEM, MARCILLE.
I CAN'T LET YOU USE ANY MORE BLACK MAGIC.


NO...IT CAN'T BE THAT.
THE MAGIC I USED DOESN'T HAVE THAT SORT OF POWER!
WHY WAS SHE LIKE THAT?
IT'S BECAUSE YOU USED DRAGON FLESH AND BLACK MAGIC.

...AND THEN THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN TURNED HER INTO...

...AND FALIN'S AND THE DRAGON'S SOULS MIXED...
MAYBE THERE WAS A SPELL ON THE RED DRAGON'S SOUL...

O-ONLY...
... THERE'S ONE THING IT COULD BE.

I'M TURNING HER OVER TO THE WESTERN ELVES.
SHURO ...?

NO...

I WANT TO FREE HER SOUL FROM THE DUNGEON...
...AND GIVE HER PEACE, AT LEAST.

I CAN'T KILL... THAT.
BUT WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE IT ON THE LOOSE.

SHURO, DON'T.
THERE MUST BE ANOTHER WAY.
"AN-OTHER WAY" ...?

THE ELVES MUST KNOW HOW TO DO THAT.
CONFESS EVERYTHING TO THE ELVES OF THE WEST.

TRY RESUR-RECTING HER WITH ALL SORTS OF MONSTER FLESH...
...UNTIL SHE'S "BACK TO NORMAL" !?
"AN-OTHER WAY"!?
WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO?

(BA CYANK)
WILL YOU GROW UP!?
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING UNTIL NOW?

YOU'VE GOT AN IDEA, DO YOU!?
SO TELL ME!
(DON SHOVE)
GO ON, TELL ME!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

WE'LL DEFEAT THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN!

IN THAT CASE, WE JUST NEED TO DEFEAT THE MAGICIAN AND REWRITE THE ORDER!
I'M... NOT VERY FAMILIAR WITH THAT SORT OF THING...
...BUT MARCILLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO IT!
SO I CAN'T LET YOU TAKE HER.

SFX: GU (SQUEEZE)
THAT RED DRAGON WAS CLEARLY FOLLOWING ORDERS OF SOME SORT.
NO ONE BUT THE MAGICIAN ■HO CREATED THIS DUNGEON COULD DO A THING LIKE THAT.

AT LEAST TRY TO TAKE THIS SERI-OUSLY, WOULD—?

PASHI (SMACK)
THERE'S A LIMIT TO FOOLISH-NESS.
YOU MEAN TO RESOLVE A PROBLEM THAT BEGAN WITH BLACK MAGIC BY USING MORE BLACK MAGIC?

AH...

PAN
(SMACK)

AH...
AH!!
I'M
SOR—

GO (THWOK)

DOTA (WHUMP)

CHIKA (FLICKER)
CHIKA
KURA (REEL)
KURA

THIS, AT LEAST, I CAN SAY WITH CERTAINTY.

BUT.
YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M NOT THAT SKILLED, AND...
...YOU'RE STRONGER THAN MOST ADVENTURERS.

WE, WHO ATE THREE PROPER MEALS A DAY AND GOT [redacted] SLEEP...

...HAVE BEEN MUCH MORE SERIOUS ABOUT THIS THAN YOU ARE!!

[redacted] ABSOLUTELY GOING TO SAVE FALIN!

LISTEN UP! WE ARE GOING TO DEFEAT THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN! I SWEAR IT!

HUH? WHAT?

BOSO! BOSO! (MUTTER)

WHAT ABOUT ME IS STRONG...?

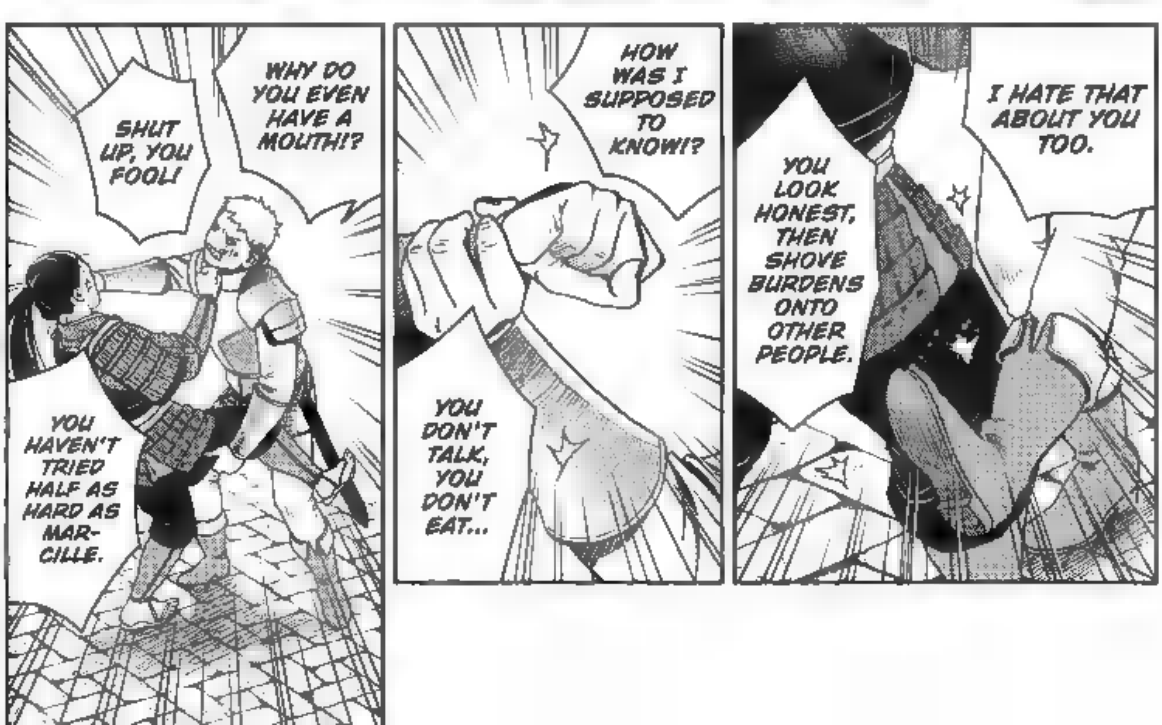
THEN EAT, BATHE, AND SLEEP!

SHURO, YOU GO BACK TO THE SURFACE.

DOSHA (WHUMP)
THIS FIGHT ISN'T OVER YET!
SHUT UP!!!
GA (WHACK)
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK...
...THEN I'VE GOT A FEW THOUGHTS OF MY OWN.
LISTEN UP, LAIOS.
I HAVE NEVER...
...BEEN ABLE TO STAND YOU.
BOGU (WHUNK)
NGUHI
A FEW...
UH... UMM...
WE'RE FRIENDS ALREADY, AREN'T WE?
I'LL COME TOO!!
HUH!?
YOU'RE GOING OUT FOR DINNER!?
GO TIRED.
TELL ME MORE ABOUT OTHER COUNTRIES!
HEY, C'MON!
YOU'RE CARELESS AND DENSE, AND [redacted] TIMING IS AWFUL.
[redacted] TOP OF THAT, YOU NEVER MEAN ANY HARM, WHICH MAKES IT EVEN WORSE!
I WOULDN'T.
DON'T, IDIOT.

WHY DID YOU KEEP QUIET ABOUT IT UNTIL NOW!?
ABOUT NOT BEING ABLE TO STAND ME!
ABOUT ME BEING DENSE AND HAVING BAD TIMING!!
THEN SAY THAT SOONER!!
DON (SHOVE)
I COULD KILL YOU NOW AND TAKE MARCILLE WITHOUT A SEC—

AS IF I COULD !!
I WAS ALL EXCITED BECAUSE I'D MADE A FRIEND ON THIS ISLAND FOR THE FIRST TIME.
TOMOR-ROW'S ALSO NOT...
TODAY WON'T WORK...
HUH?
THE DAY AFTER THAT...
MOST PEOPLE WOULD HAVE FIGURED IT OUT FROM WHAT I DID SAY!
TRY A LITTLE HARDER TO PICK UP ON THINGS!


SHUT UP, YOU FOOL!
WHY DO YOU EVEN HAVE A MOUTH!?
YOU HAVEN'T TRIED HALF AS HARD AS MAR-CILLE.
HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW!?
YOU DON'T TALK, YOU DON'T EAT...
YOU LOOK HONEST, THEN SHOVE BURDENS ONTO OTHER PEOPLE.
I HATE THAT ABOUT YOU TOO.

I MUST NOT HAVE RAISED HIM PROPERLY...
I DON'T THINK NOW IS THE TIME FOR THIS...
MORON! IDIOT! DUNCE!
YOUR MOMMY'S AN OUTIE!
WHAT A CHILDISH FIGHT.
SENSHI, WOULD YOU COLLECT THE SCATTERED FOODSTUFFS?
YES'M.
THE GNOME AND I WILL REVIVE THEM, BUT THERE ISN'T ENOUGH BLOOD.
NECK INJURY
MISSING
ONE OF US IS IN CRITICAL CONDITION. THREE ARE MISSING.
SEVEN OF US DIED IN THAT BATTLE, INCLUDING ME.
FELL
SUFFOCATED
SUFFOCATED
CRUSHED
CRUSHED
CRUSHED
BLEED OUT
TREAT THE WOUNDED AND SEARCH FOR THE MISSING, THEN.
USE ANY DUBIOUS MAGIC, AND I'LL CUT YOU DOWN ON THE SPOT.
NO THANK YOU.
...UM, IF IT'S A SIMPLE RESUR-RECTION, I CAN...

SEE THAT, SHURO !?
I KNEW IT! I ATE, SO I'M STRONGER NOW!!
ボガ
BOGA (THWOK)
ガ
フラ
FURA
フラ
FURA (SWAY)
ばた
BATA (FWUMP)

SA (SHFF)
さっ

AHEM!

D... DAMN IT...

もぐ
MOGU
もぐ
MOGU
もぐ
MOGU (CHEW)

ぱく
PAKU (CHOMP)

YUM...

ASEBI
...ARE YOU SURE?
ASEBI IS MISSING.
SHE PROBABLY RAN OFF. LEAVE HER.

YOUNG MASTER.

...NO. PREPARE THE RETURN SPELL.
WE'LL GO BACK TO THE SURFACE.
HE'S EATING!
THE REVIVALS ARE COMPLETE.
WHEN DO YOU WISH TO CONTINUE?

DAAA GUSHO

NO, YOU DID YOUR ABSOLUTE BEST. THANK YOU.
I'M SORRY I MADE YOU COME WITH ME.

OUR STRENGTH WASN'T ENOUGH. I'M TERRIBLY SORRY.

I'M GOING TO REPORT THIS INCIDENT TO THE ISLAND'S LORD.
I SEE.

...I'LL RETURN TO MY COUNTRY.
I EXPECT I'LL NEVER RETURN TO THIS ISLAND.

I DON'T KNOW.
SHE ASKED ME TO LET HER THINK ABOUT IT.
I WAS WAITING FOR HER ANSWER.

YOU PROPOSED. WHAT DID SHE SAY?

I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO TAKE FALIN BACK WITH ME.

I WONDERED WHAT IT WAS, AND IT TURNED OUT TO BE A STRANGELY COLORED CATERPILLAR.
AN ORDINARY WOMAN WOULD PROBABLY HAVE SCOWLED OR SHRIEKED.

ONE DAY, WHILE WE WERE CAMPING, I HAPPENED TO WAKE.
SHE WAS KEEPING WATCH, AND SHE WAS GAZING AT SOMETHING ON HER FINGERTIP.

I FELL IN LOVE WITH HER PROFILE THEN AND THERE.
HEY, YOU'RE A FEMALE.

HOWEVER, SHE WAS GAZING AT IT, ENTRANCED, AS IF IT WERE A JEWEL.

I WISH I'D TOLD HER SOONER.
I HADN'T ACTUALLY MENTIONED ANY OF THIS TO HER YET.
THAT'S THE SORT OF WORLD HE'S FROM.
HUH? HE JUST PROPOSED OUT OF NOWHERE?
THAT'S SCARY.

I LOVED HER VOICE, HER IDEAS.
HER SMILE.

THERE ARE NO OTHER WOMEN THAT FASCINATING.

I ENVY IT.

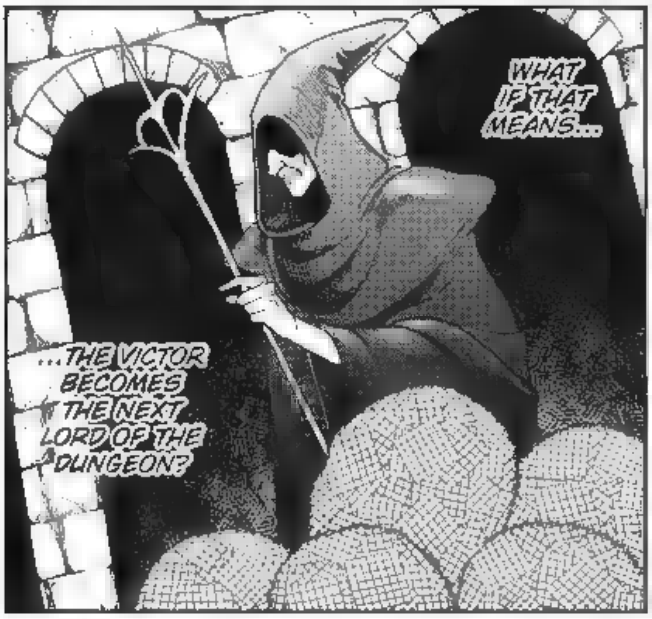
...I SEE.

THAT SIDE OF YOU IS JUST...
HAAH...
THEN I'LL TELL FALIN FOR YOU.

I DIDN'T REALLY DO ANYTHING.
YOU WERE A HUGE HELP.
MY ATTACK WAS POINTLESS TOO.
KABRU.
...EITHER THERE ARE NO VITAL ORGANS THERE...
...OR SHE HAS MULTI-PLES.
...BUT FOR MY SISTER, THEY WEREN'T.
EVERY PLACE YOU STABBED WOULD HAVE BEEN FATAL FOR A HUMAN...
IN OTHER WORDS ...
ALL SORTS OF...?
NO, IT SHOWED ME ALL SORTS OF THINGS!
HE REALLY DOES LIKE MONSTERS, DOESN'T HE?
SHE DIDN'T EVEN CRINGE WHEN HE THROAT WAS SLIT.
SO THIS KNOWLEDGE IS HIS WEAPON, HM?
QUITE A LOT OF MONSTERS HAVE SEVERAL BRAINS.
IT'S COMMON AMONG CHIMERA TYPES.
YOU'RE A GOOD ARTIST!
BASILISKS, CERBERUS, SCYLLA...
...SHE MAY EVEN HAVE ANOTHER AIR INTAKE.
HIS PUPILS ARE DILATED.
SINCE SLITTING HER THROAT DIDN'T INTERFERE WITH HER ABILITY TO BREATHE...

...NO ONE ELSE HAS THE KNOWLEDGE AND MOTIVATIONS HE DOES.
TRUE, THERE ARE MANY ADVENTURERS MORE SKILLED THAN HE IS. HOWEVER...
THIS GUY MIGHT ACTUALLY DO IT.

DEFEAT THE LORD OF THE DUNGEON...


WHAT IF THAT MEANS...
...THE VICTOR BECOMES THE NEXT LORD OF THE DUNGEON?

BUT...

...AFTER HE DEFEATS THE DUNGEON'S LORD, WHAT THEN?
THEY SAY THAT THE ONE WHO VANQUISHES THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN WILL BE GIVEN "THE ENTIRE KINGDOM."

WILL HE MEEKLY SEAL THE DUNGEON?

ONCE THIS MAN IS IN POSSESSION OF A CITY BUILT BY BLACK MAGIC AND ALL ITS MONSTERS...
...WHAT WILL HE DO?

WHEN YOU'RE REVIVED AFTER LOSING THAT MUCH BLOOD, YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE STARVING.
GIVE ME A MINUTE.
HUH?
AREN'T YOU HUNGRY?

WOULD YOU? THANKS.
WANT ME TO TEACH YOU?
DO YOU KNOW HOW TO PREPARE IT?
...THESE?

NO, I DIDN'T MEAN THAT.
WHAT?
IT'S NOT READY YET.
COULD I HAVE ONE OF THOSE THINGS YOU PICKED UP EARLIER?

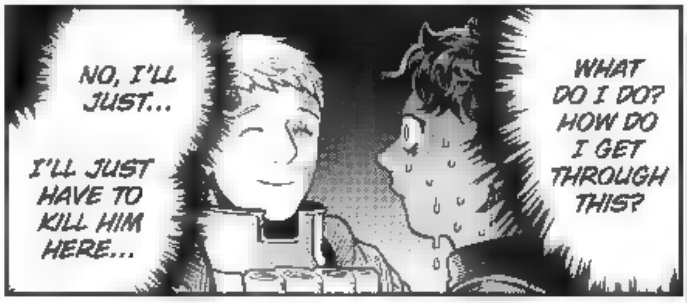
JUWA
JUUU (SIZZLE)
CHAKA (CLACKA)
CHAKA
CHAKA
GAN (WHACK)
GAN
SU (SLICE)
SU
SUUU
KYU (PINCH)
KURU (ROLL)
KURU
ADD MORE...
ROLLED HARPY-EGG OMELET
Ingredients
Harpy egg — 1
Oil — A little
Seasonings — To taste
ENERGY
VITAMINS
PROTEIN
CALCIUM
FAT
CARBS
A ROLLED HARPY-EGG OMELET.
WHAT IS THIS?

GO AHEAD—HAVE ONE.
...YOU SEEMED INTERESTED IN MONSTER CUISINE.
ZUI (PUSH)

SENSHI FOUND THEM A LITTLE WHILE AGO.
WE WERE GOING TO EAT THEM OUR-SELVES, BUT...

ZOWA (SHUDDER)

GATSU
GATSU (GNAW)
MOOO
GOOOO (BLAZE)


NO, I'LL JUST...
I'LL JUST HAVE TO KILL HIM HERE...
WHAT DO I DO? HOW DO I GET THROUGH THIS?

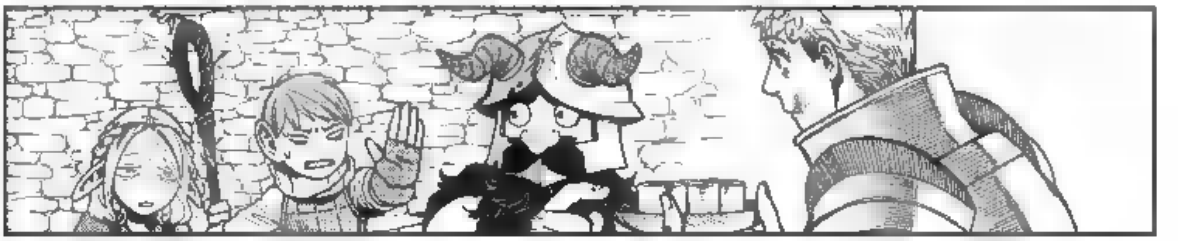
KI...
KILL...

ABSOLUTELY, I DO NOT WANT TO EAT THAT!!!!

GASHI (GRAB)
I CAN'T MANAGE IT NOW!!
THANK YOU FOR THE FOOD!

BURU
BURU (TREMBLE)
BURU

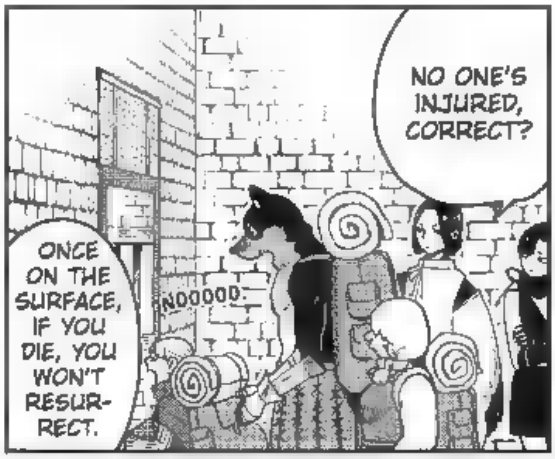
HE'S A REALLY GOOD GUY...
MOGU
MOGU (CHEW)
THE MAN WILL ANYTHING TO GET ON SOMEONE'S GOOD SIDE.
THAT'S JUST LIKE HIM.

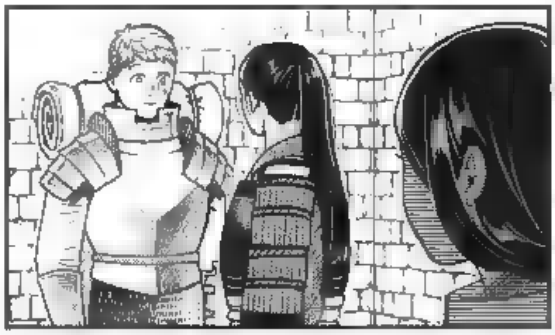


HURRY UP AND SWALLOW THAT.

CUT IT OUT.

YOU DIDN'T DIE.
NOW I FEEL ALIVE AGAIN.


NO ONE'S INJURED, CORRECT?
NOOOOO.
ONCE ON THE SURFACE, IF YOU DIE, YOU WON'T RESURRECT.



THE RETURN SPELL IS READY.

KORON (ROLL)

...BUT CAN'T RETURN TO THE SURFACE BECAUSE OF THE BLACK MAGIC...
GOSO (RUMMAGE)
HOWEVER, IF YOU DO MANAGE TO SURVIVE...

...I THINK YOU'LL DIE BEFORE YOU REACH THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN.
OF FOOD POISONING, SAY.
TO BE HONEST ...

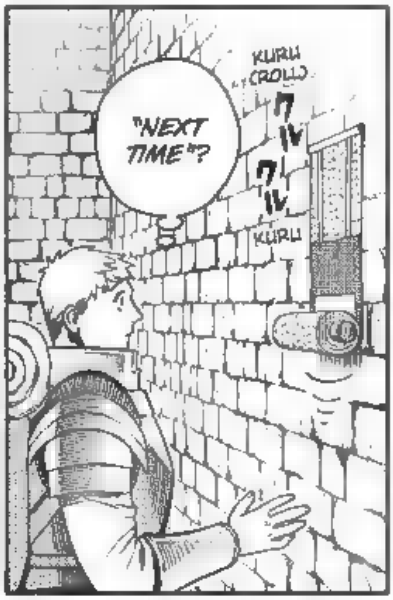
DON'T DIE.

THANKS.

...RING THIS.
ITS DISTANT TWIN WILL RESONATE WITH IT.
I'LL SEND A MESSENGER AND HELP YOU FLEE TO THE EAST.

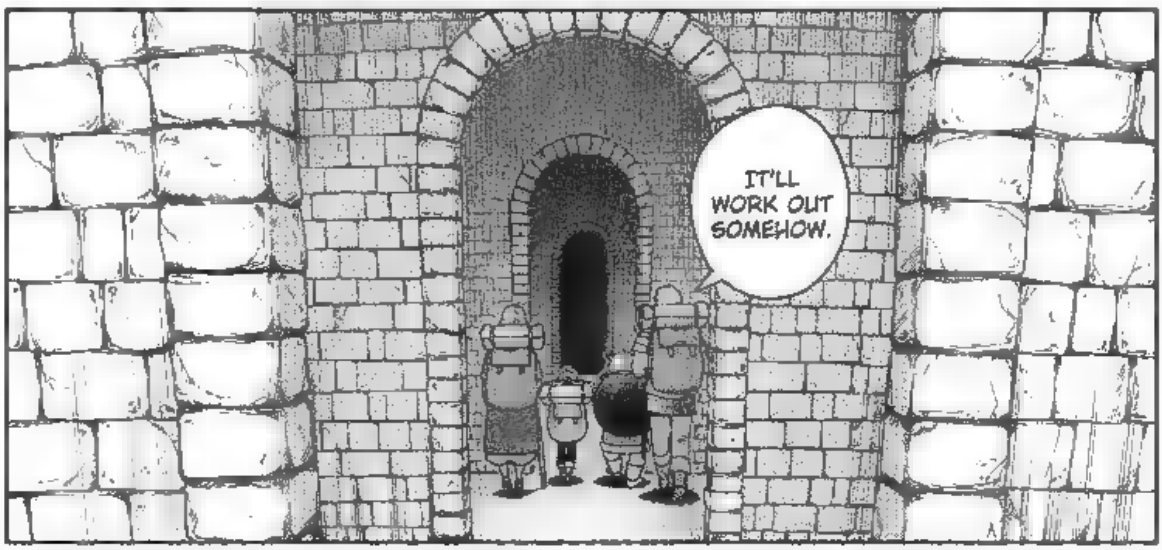
IT WAS THE MOST BENEFICIAL PART OF ALL THIS.
I'M GLAD I GOT TO TALK WITH YOU.
NO, THAT'S MY LINE.
ギュ
GYU (SQUEEZE)
LAIOS.
OH, GOOD.
DON'T FORGET IT NEXT TIME, PLEASE.
HM? OF COURSE.
YOU DO REMEMBER MY NAME, DON'T YOU?
UM...
HURRY UP.
I'LL SEE YOU LATER.

COME ON, LAIOS.
THERE'S NO GOING BACK NOW.


"NEXT TIME"?
KURU
KURU

...I'M SORRY.

I HAD A PREMONITION, DAMMIT.
DAMN IT. SEE? I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN.
THAT'S VULGAR, CHIL.


IT'LL WORK OUT SOMEHOW.

39. SHAPESHIFTER -1-

WE COULDN'T FIND STAIRS THAT WENT UP TO SAVE OUR LIVES...

...BUT AS SOON AS WE DECIDE TO GO ON, WE GET THIS.

IT'S STILL WET.

FALIN MUST HAVE JUST COME THROUGH HERE, HEADED DOWN.

I BET THAT WAS A TIGHT SQUEEZE.

I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF IT.

I DON'T LIKE IT ONE BIT.

ヒュー

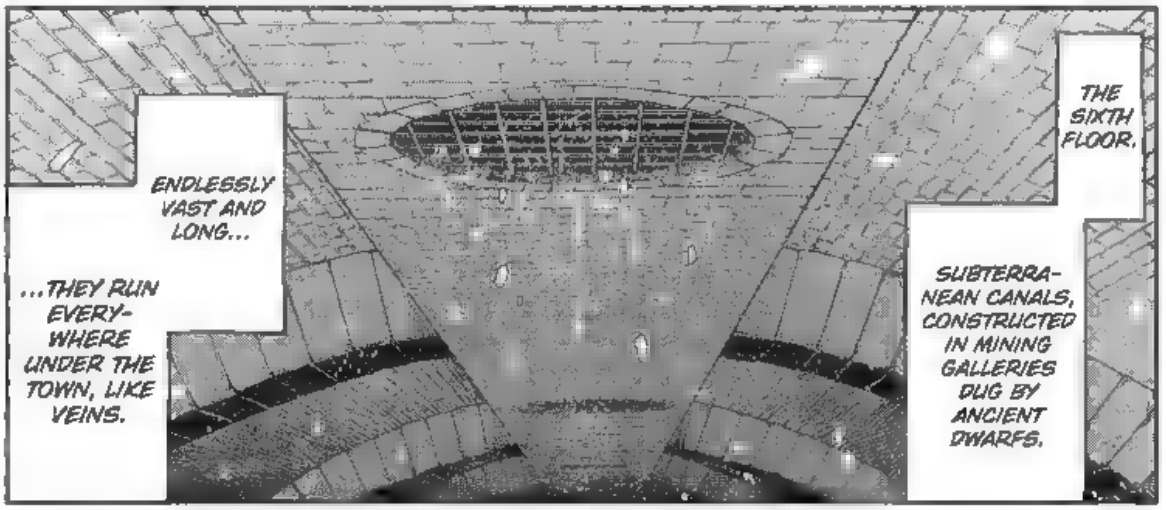
PIYUU (WHOOSH)

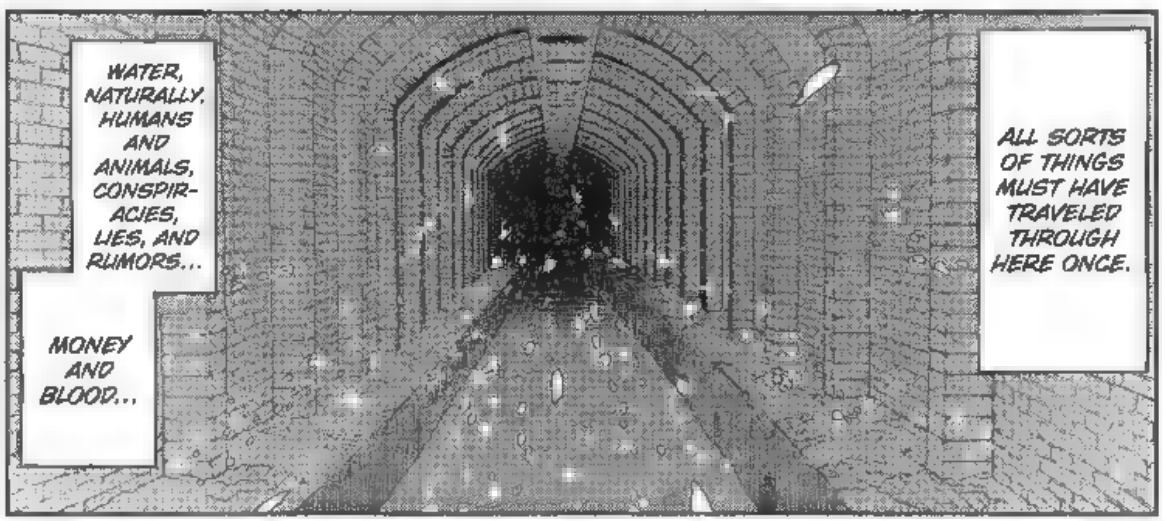
WHY DON'T YOU LIKE IT?

WELL, ALL THAT HEAT—

I DON'T LIKE THE SIXTH FLOOR EITHER, SO I DON'T FEEL GREAT.

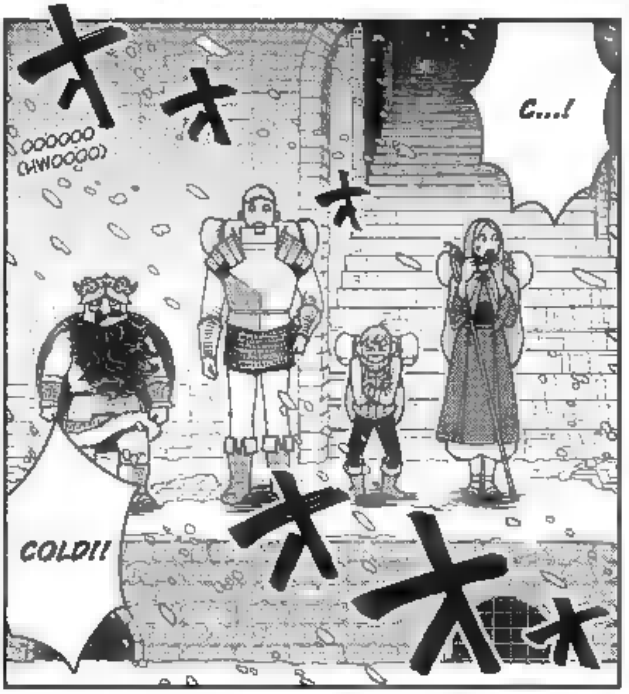
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.


THE SIXTH FLOOR.
ENDLESSLY VAST AND LONG...
...THEY RUN EVERY-WHERE UNDER THE TOWN, LIKE VEINS.
SUBTERRA-NEAN CANALS, CONSTRUCTED IN MINING GALLERIES DUG BY ANCIENT DWARFS.


WATER, NATURALLY. HUMANS AND ANIMALS, CONSPIR-ACIES, LIES, AND RUMORS...
MONEY AND BLOOD...
ALL SORTS OF THINGS MUST HAVE TRAVELED THROUGH HERE ONCE.

THE SIXTH FLOOR SHOULD BE HOT AND HUMID.
FWOO
MAYBE WE CAME OUT SOME-WHERE ELSE?

NO...I RECOGNIZE THIS ROUTE.


C...!
OOOOOO (WWOOOO)
COLD!!

IT'S NOT WEIRD FOR THE TEMPERA-TURE TO CHANGE.
WELL, IT IS A DUNGEON WITH SHIFTING WALLS AND PATHS.

THIS IS DEFINITELY THE FLOOR WHERE THE RED DRAGON ATTACKED US...
...AND ALMOST WIPED US OUT.

...BUT THE SNOW AND WATER ERASED THE BLOODSTAINS. THAT'S A PROBLEM.
JYARI (CRUNCH)
COLD IS BETTER THAN HOT...

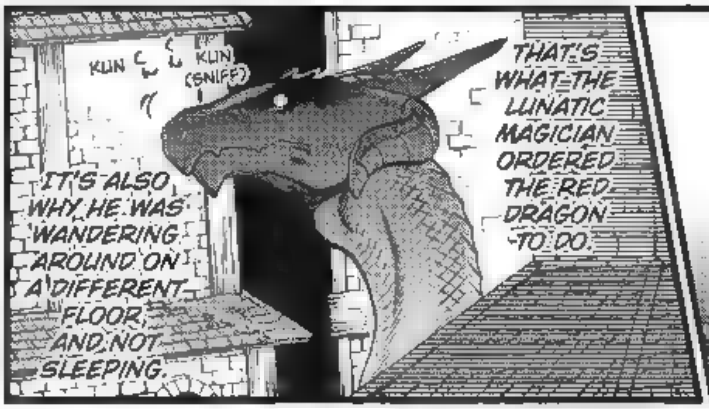
BIIII (RIP)
I HAD TWO, AND THEN FALIN RIPPED ONE UP. THAT HURT.
I DO WANT A CHANGE OF CLOTHES.
YEAH...

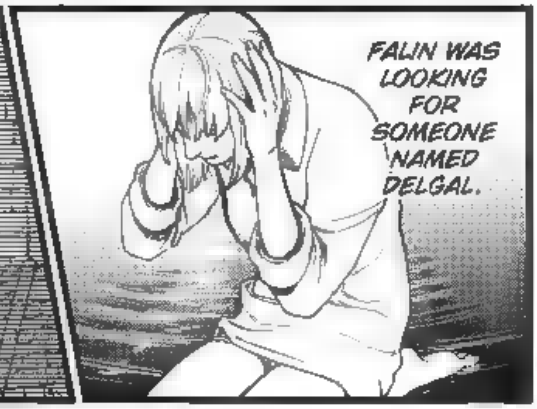
FOR NOW, WANT TO GO BACK TO WHERE WE GOT TAKEN OUT BEFORE?
IF THE CLEANERS HAVEN'T EATEN IT, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET OUR STUFF.
THAT WOULD BE GREAT.

ABOUT THAT...

AND?
AFTER BLUFFING LIKE THAT, YOU'VE GOT SOME SORT OF PLAN, RIGHT?

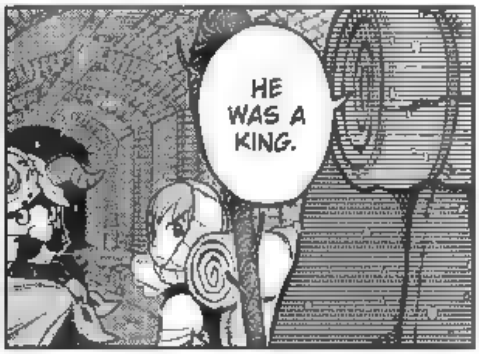
THIS COLD IS PROBABLY TOUGH ON THE RED DRAGON...
OH, IS THAT WHY SHE HAD FEATH-ERS?
.....
I WONDER IF FALIN'S OKAY.

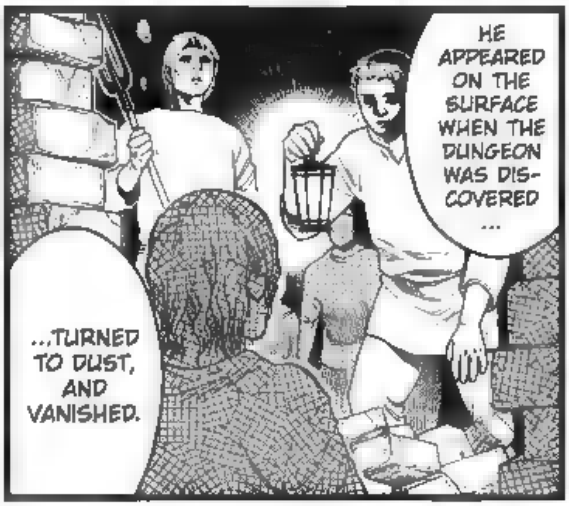

KUN
KUN (SNIFF)
IT'S ALSO WHY HE WAS WANDERING AROUND ON A DIFFERENT FLOOR, AND NOT SLEEPING.
THAT'S WHAT THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN ORDERED THE RED DRAGON TO DO.


FALIN WAS LOOKING FOR SOMEONE NAMED DELGAL.

DELGAL, THE LAST KING OF THE GOLDEN CITY THAT FELL A THOUSAND YEARS AGO.
THERE ARE INSCRIPTIONS PRAISING HIM ALL OVER THE DUNGEON.

DELGAL ...
WHO'S THAT AGAIN?
I'VE HEARD THE NAME.


HE WAS A KING.

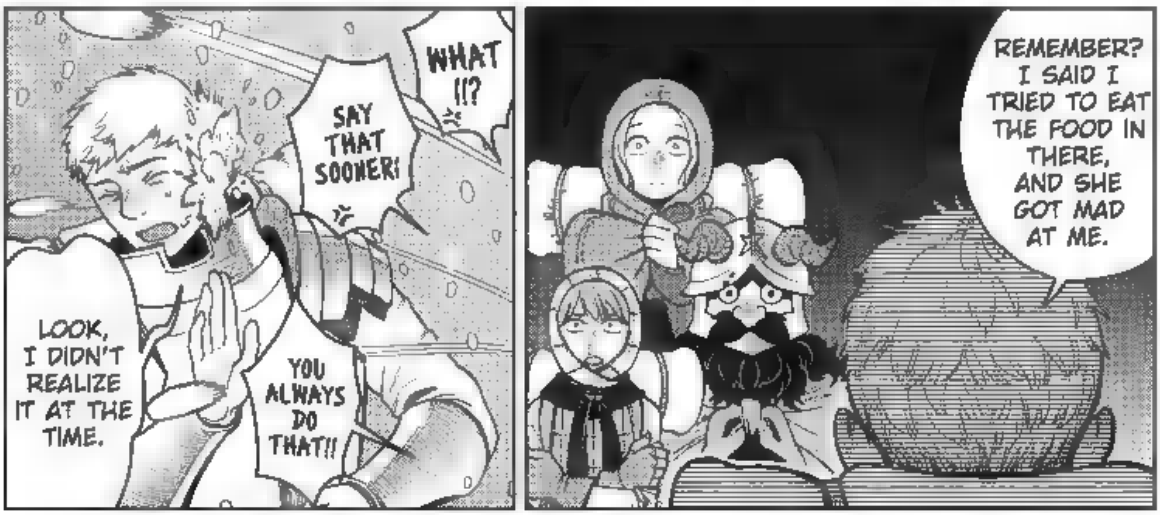

HE APPEARED ON THE SURFACE WHEN THE DUNGEON WAS DIS-COVERED ...
...TURNED TO DUST, AND VANISHED.

WAIT.
BUT DELGAL IS...
RIGHT.

YEAH, THAT'S IT!
THE NAME'S ON EXCAVATED ARTIFACTS SOMETI...

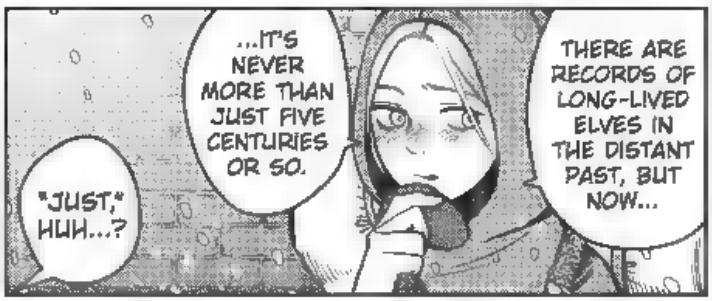
AND SO SHE TOOK US FOR ASSASSINS AND ATTACKED US.
...TO FIND A KING WHO DISAP-PEARED AGES AGO!?
SO...
...THE MAGICIAN'S WORKING THE DRAGON LIKE A DOG AND REMODEL-ING THE DUNGEON ...
EVER SINCE, SHE'S BEEN AFRAID THE SAME THING WOULD HAPPEN TO DELGAL, HIS SON.
THE PREVIOUS KING WAS ASSASSINATED RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN.
ビュオオオオ
BYUOOO (HWOOO)

NO, A WHILE BACK...
...I ACTUALLY MET THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN INSIDE THE LIVING PAINTINGS.
THAT'S HOW I FOUND OUT!
.....?
WHAT'S THAT? ARE YOU MAKING IT UP?


WHAT !!?
SAY THAT SOONER!
LOOK, I DIDN'T REALIZE IT AT THE TIME.
YOU ALWAYS DO THAT!!
REMEMBER? I SAID I TRIED TO EAT THE FOOD IN THERE, AND SHE GOT MAD AT ME.

DO ELVES LIVE A THOUSAND YEARS?
FOR THE RECORD — THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN IS AN ELF, RIGHT?

I SEE...
RELIVING THE PAST...


"JUST," HUH...?
...IT'S NEVER MORE THAN JUST FIVE CENTURIES OR SO.
THERE ARE RECORDS OF LONG-LIVED ELVES IN THE DISTANT PAST, BUT NOW...

IN DAYS OF OLD, MAGICIAN AROUND THE WORLD RESEARCHED ETERNAL LIFE
...BUT ONE EVEN GOT THERE AND THE SPELL WAS DEEMED IMPOSSIBLE

IMPOS-SIBLE!
PROLONG-ING YOUR LIFE WITH YOUR OWN MAGIC IS LIKE...
...TRYING TO LIVE A LONG TIME BY EATING YOUR OWN FLESH.

WELL, SHE MESSES WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES AT WILL.
SNIFF!
SHE COULD PROBABLY EXTEND HER OWN BEFORE BREAKFAST.

UH-HUH.
UH-HUH.

IN ANY CASE, IF SHE ATTACKED US BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT WE WERE THE KING'S ENEMIES...
...WE MAY BE ABLE TO CLEAR UP THE MISUNDER-STANDING BY TALKING TO HER.

CAN YOU HEAR ME!?
ARE YOU STAYING CLOSE!?
GO SOON!
THE WIND'S GOTTEN STRONG.
I CAN'T SEE WHAT'S AHEAD.
IT'S COLD...
GYU
(KUI CLUG)
GU
(GYUU SQUEEZE)
GYUU
GYU
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE ANYONE HERE!
LET'S ALL HOLD HANDS.
WE CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS.
THERE'S A TUNNEL.
LET'S SHELTER IN THERE FOR A BIT.
GOOOO, (ROARRR)

CHIL?
MARCILLE.
HERE.
I'M RIGHT HERE.
OVER HERE.
NO PROB-LEMS.
SENSHI.
YUP.
I'M FINE.

HFF!
HFF!
GOOO
ゴオオオ

IT'S PITCH-BLACK.
IS...IS EVERYBODY HERE?

PAA (FLARE)

PO (GROW)
POPO

WAIT, WHAT WAS...?
PHEW. THAT'S GREAT.
HAAH...
MARCILLE, WOULD YOU GET US A LIGHT?
HM?

HWOO...
THIS LOOKS LIKE AN OLD PRISON.
STILL, FOR A WHILE THERE, I WAS...

THERE'S MORE OF US!!

HUH!?

NO WAY !!

WHA —?

THIS IS...

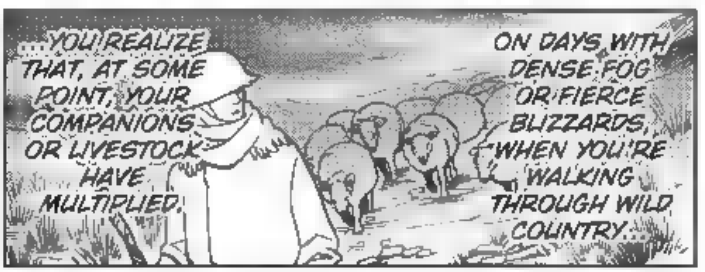
UM...
NO...

AN ILLU-SION SPELL ...!?
DAMMIT! WHAT'S GOING ON?

DON'T YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM?
SHAPE ...?
WE GET THEM IN MY HOMETOWN SOMETIMES.

I THINK...
...IT'S PROB-ABLY SHAPE-SHIFT-ERS.

IT'S MORE OF A RUMOR OR FAIRY TALE—I'VE NEVER SEEN A REAL ONE.
ARE THEY A TYPE OF FAIRY?
IS IT JUST SOME KIND OF PRANK?

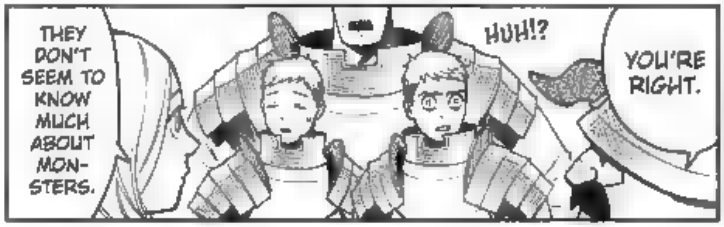

...YOU REALIZE THAT, AT SOME POINT, YOUR COMPANIONS OR LIVESTOCK HAVE MULTIPLIED.
ON DAYS WITH DENSE FOG OR FIERCE BLIZZARDS, WHEN YOU'RE WALKING THROUGH WILD COUNTRY...

YOUR HOME-TOWN'S DANGER-OUS.
HUH...
THAT'S BECAUSE SHAPE-SHIFTERS HAVE COPIED THEIR SHAPES AND SLIPPED IN...

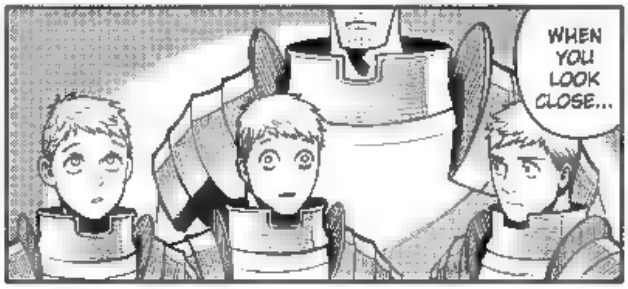
HURRY, FIND THE FAKES!
WAIT JUST A MIN-UTE!
YAAH!
IF YOU GO TO SLEEP WITHOUT NOTICING THEM, THEY EAT THE REAL THING AND TAKE ITS PLACE.

...ARE FAKES?
HEY.
CAN WE AGREE THAT THE THREE LAIOSES OVER THERE...

WELL, THIS ISN'T GOOD.
OH NO, OH-NO!!
I HAVE TO EAT IT...

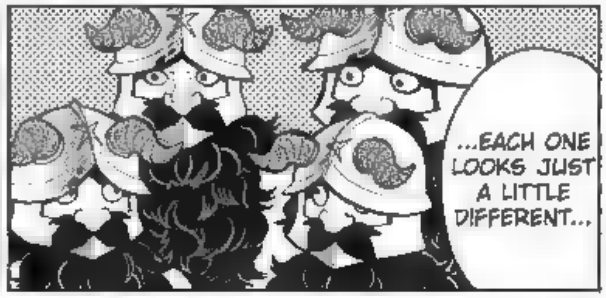

THEY DON'T SEEM TO KNOW MUCH ABOUT MON-STERS.
HUH!?
YOU'RE RIGHT.

THEY SAY THAT SHAPESHIFTERS READ THE THOUGHTS OF A LIVING THING, THEN PHYSICALLY MIMIC THE PEOPLE CLOSE TO THEM.
THE "ME"s OVER THERE...
...PROBABLY REFLECT THE WAY YOU THREE REMEMBER ME.

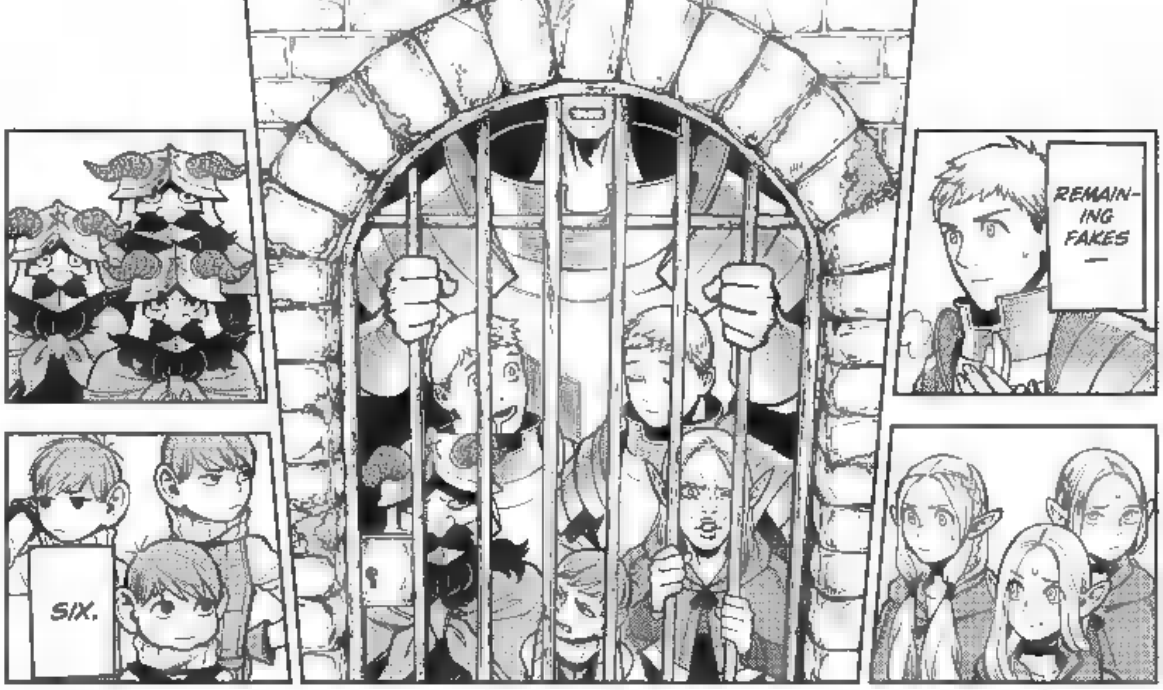

WHEN YOU LOOK CLOSE...

TRUE...

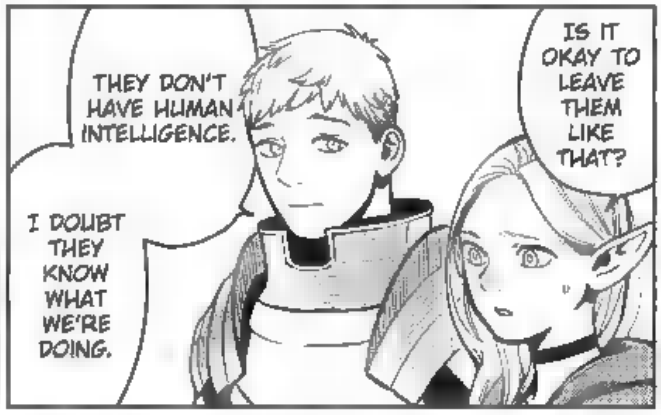
...I THINK.


...EACH ONE LOOKS JUST A LITTLE DIFFERENT...

TH-THAT BURNS ME UP...
WHO REMEMBERS ME LIKE THIS!?
KIN
KIN (SHRIEK)
TAKE A GOOD LOOK!
YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE!
TRUE!
I USE MAGIC! BLACK MAGIC!
SHE'S CLEARLY A FAKE!
HUH?
THEN WOULD YOU HURRY AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT GIRL?
MY NECKBAND ISN'T A SCARF.
AND SENSHI'S HELMET IS MISSING ITS HOLE.
THESE TWO ARE DEFINITE FAKES TOO.
USE YOUR EYES!
HUH!?
...HOW DO YOU FIGURE?
FAR TOO VAGUE, NOT ENOUGH DETAIL.
THAT'S GOT TO BE HOW LAIOS REMEMBERS US.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...


SIX.
REMAIN-ING FAKES —

I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT UNKNOWN MONSTERS UNDER THESE CIRCUM-STANCES.
STILL, IF WE HURT THEM, THEY'RE BOUND TO FIGHT BACK.


I DOUBT THEY KNOW WHAT WE'RE DOING.
THEY DON'T HAVE HUMAN INTELLIGENCE.
IS IT OKAY TO LEAVE THEM LIKE THAT?

シラー
SHIRA (GLARE)

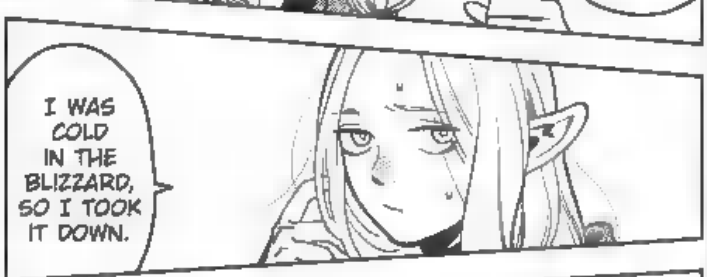
CAN HE TELL THE REAL ONES FROM THE FAKES?
WELL, HE'S ENERGETIC, BUT...
IT'S DOUBT-FUL...

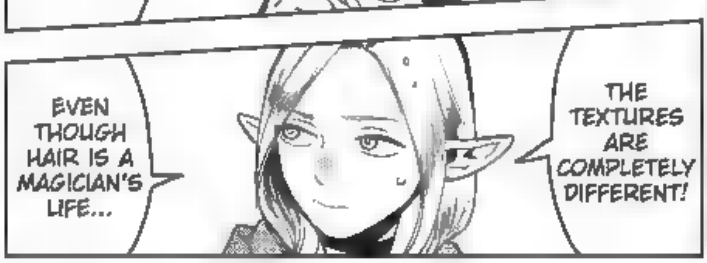
WE'LL UNMASK THE FAKES PEACE-FULLY...
...AND DEAL WITH THEM ALL AT ONCE!!

...EVEN AS WE DO THIS, OUR IMPRECISE MEMORIES ARE BEING CORRECTED.
WE NEED TO SETTLE THIS FAST, OR ELSE.

WHEN YOU'RE SIDE BY SIDE LIKE THIS...
...THERE ARE PLENTY OF DIFFERENCES, BUT...

SEE?
SEE?
THIS STYLE IS UNUSUAL. YOU REMEMBER IT, RIGHT?


I WAS COLD IN THE BLIZZARD, SO I TOOK IT DOWN.


EVEN THOUGH HAIR IS A MAGICIAN'S LIFE...
THE TEXTURES ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!

THE MARCILLES ALL HAVE DIFFERENT HAIR.
I COMPLETELY DON'T REMEMBER WHAT HER HAIR WAS LIKE LAST TIME I SAW HER.
YOU'RE KIDDING!!

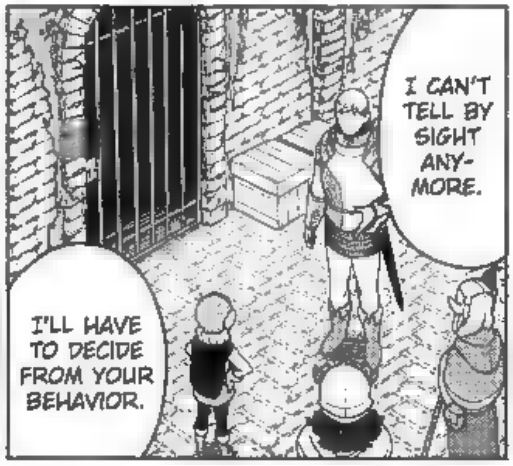
OH! I KNOW!
LET'S USE INFORMATION ONLY I KNOW TO DECIDE.

HMM...
.....
...

WELL, THEY ARE THE MARCILLES IN OUR HEADS.
THEY ALL SOUND ABOUT RIGHT.

OUR GRIMOIRES!
How to cast black magic:
* Do dark-looking stuff
* Raise your staff
* Chant
Doodle corner
Spell to turn back time
ABRACADABRA
NOT THAT!
DON'T ASK US TO GUESS YOUR MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME.
ゴソ
GOSO (RUMMAGE)
NO, NO, THE GRAMMAR OF THOSE CHANTS IS ALL WRONG.
THAT'S MY LINE!
BUT THE OTHER TWO BOTH LOOK LEGITIMATE.
HUH !?
THERE, SEE!?
OHHH!
ONE BOOK IS CLEARLY FAKE.
WELL, OUR POSSES-SIONS MAY HELP TO UNMASK US.
SENSHI, SPREAD OUT YOUR INVENTORY.
LIKE WE'D RECOGNIZE CORRECT SPELL GRAMMAR?
GRRR!

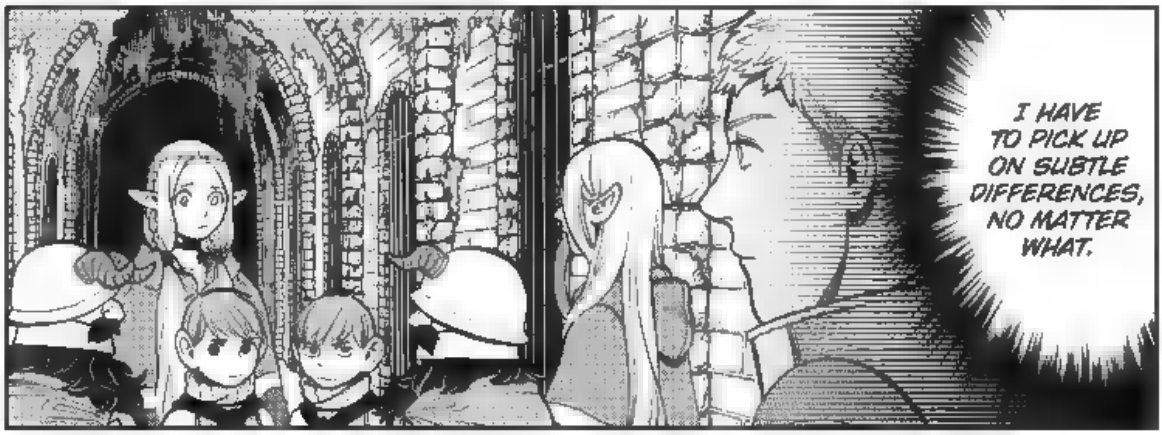
HAUL THOSE THREE AWAY!
JAN CTA-DAAD
JAJAN
SIGH...
...NOW WE'RE STUCK.
WE'VE GOT IT DOWN TO TWO EACH, BUT...
THREE.
REMAIN-ING FAKES —



CHAPTER 39: THE END

40. Shapeshifter -2-

DISCERNING WHICH OF MY COMPANIONS ARE THE MONSTER IMPOS-TERS...
IT'S A GOOD CHANCE TO REGAIN THE TRUST I LOST.
I DON'T WANT TO DISAPPOINT THEM ANY MORE THAN I ALREADY HAVE.


I HAVE TO PICK UP ON SUBTLE DIFFERENCES, NO MATTER WHAT.

THIS IS HIM, AFTER ALL.
HE JUST MIGHT.
HE MAY EVEN FIND THE FAKES MORE APPEALING, SINCE THEY'RE MONSTERS.

WE'LL HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS OURSELVES .....!!

....AND THE PROVISIONS MADAME MAIZURU GAVE US.
THERE'S WHAT I FOUND ON THE FIFTH FLOOR...

...WE SHOULD MAKE...
SINCE WE JUST GOT THE PERFECT INGREDIENTS...

I'LL WATCH FROM HERE.
I WANT YOU ALL TO DO YOUR BEST.
JERK.
WHAT SHOULD WE MAKE?

IF YOU WORK TOGETHER, I CAN WATCH FOR BEHAVIORAL DIFFERENCES.
SENSHI CAN TEACH YOU THE RECIPES.

HUH !!?

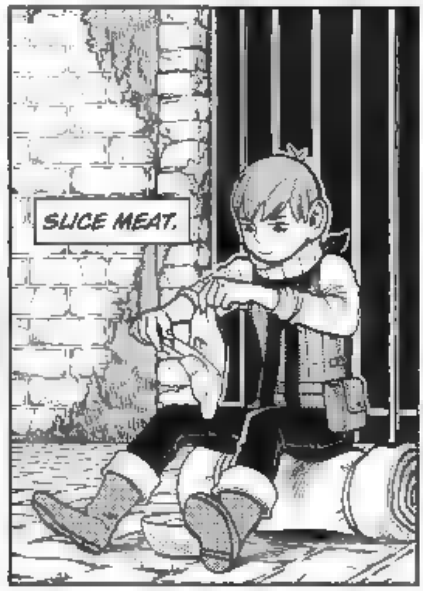
ONE MORE THING!
I WANT THE DOUBLES TO PAIR UP AND MAKE ONE DISH PER TEAM.

START COOKING !!

ARE YOU ALL READY?

ALL RIGHT.

MIX THE EGGS AND SEASONING.


SLICE MEAT.

FIRST, THE CHIL-CHUCK TEAM.

YOU'RE MAKING THIS HARDER!
WHAT ARE YOU WRITING !?
MEMO, MEMO.

NOTE: "CHIL A IN MIDDLE OF HALL."
"CHIL B SAT ON CRATE AND STARTED WORKING."

HUHN?
LAIOS. OPEN IT.
IT WON'T OPEN.

GUHH!
NH...

I'VE GOT CONVICTIONS AND PRIDE AND ALL THAT, YOU KNOW...
NO, COME ON, YOU KNOW THIS.
PEOPLE HELP ONE ANOTHER, CHILCHUCK.
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
DID YOU SEE THAT? B'S THE FAKE!!
HE SLIPPED UP!
HUH?
CHA HAAA!
YOU CAN TELL, RIGHT!?
L-LAIOS...
YORO (TOTTER)
OUR CHILCHUCK...
...IS CUTER.
QUIT!
AREN'T YOU A LITTLE TOO CYNICAL?
CLOSER INSPECTION, A HAS MEAN-LOOKING EYES.
HEY.
DOLT.
BOSO (MUTTER)
NOTE: "INSULTED ME IN COMMON TONGUE..."
KEEP COOKING, PLEASE.
I'LL CONSIDER IT!
HEH HEH...
HE DOES HAVE A RATHER SELF-SEEKING FACE.
CHIL A.
THIS ONE MIGHT BE THE FAKE.

HARPY. WHY?

IT'S A LITTLE LATE TO ASK, BUT...
IT'S NOT FROM A COCKATRICE, IS IT?
...WHAT KIND OF EGG IS THIS?

NEXT, THE MARCILLE TEAM.

I'VE STARTED TO COM-PROMISE A LITTLE RECENTLY, BUT DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY!!
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN VERY CLEAR!
MONSTERS THAT LOOK HUMAN ARE OFF-LIMITS!

ROUGHLY PEEL A DRYAD, THEN DICE IT.

IN CON-TRAST ...

MARCILLE B IS JUST LIKE ALWAYS.
...TO A FAULT.

IF IT WILL SAVE FALIN...
...I'LL DO ANYTHING.
...I'VE EATEN FISH-MAN EGGS AND DRYADS.
WHY WOULD I FUSS LIKE THAT NOW?
WHAT DO YOU THINK, MARCILLE A?
BOIL IT.
I DON'T LIKE IT, BUT...
I-I'D DO ANYTHING FOR FALIN TOO, OKAY!?
B'S RESO-LUTION SEEMS PRETTY SHALLOW.
WHOA...
WHA?
EH?
HM? THIS IS TOUGH.
BOTH STANCES SOUND LIKE MARCILLE.
WHEN THEY'RE SOFT ENOUGH TO PIERCE WITH A CHOPSTICK, DRAIN THEM...
ZABAAA (SPLASH)
...MIX WITH SPICES, THEN MASH.
WELL, I MEAN, WILL EATING HARPIES MAKE THE SITUATION ANY BETTER!?

PER-FECT FOOD!
WHAT WAS IT...?
...ARE A...
RIGHT. AFTER ALL...
... EGGS ...

HEH!

THERE WERE NESTS IN A COLLAPSED HOUSE.
I TOOK ALL THAT WERE IN THERE.
WHERE DID YOU GET THOSE HARPY EGGS?
CUT INGREDIENTS INTO 1 CM CUBES.

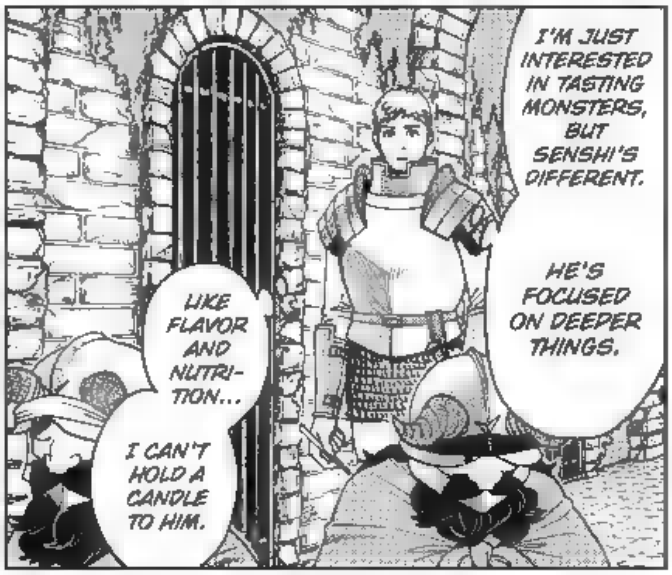
THE SENSHI TEAM.

IT'S PACKED WITH NUTRIENTS THAT ARE VITAL FOR ADVENTUR-ERS.
WE WERE LUCKY TO GET SOME.

NO...
...IT WASN'T.
RICE WAS SHURO'S FAVORITE FOOD.

SAUTÉ INGREDIENTS AND RICE OVER LOW HEAT, THEN SEASON.

ALL THE DISHES LOOK GOOD.
I WON'T BE ABLE TO DECIDE BASED ON SKILL ALONE.


I'M JUST INTERESTED IN TASTING MONSTERS, BUT SENSHI'S DIFFERENT.
HE'S FOCUSED ON DEEPER THINGS.
LIKE FLAVOR AND NUTRI-TION...
I CAN'T HOLD A CANDLE TO HIM.

ISN'T SENSHI B...
...KIND OF... DASHING?

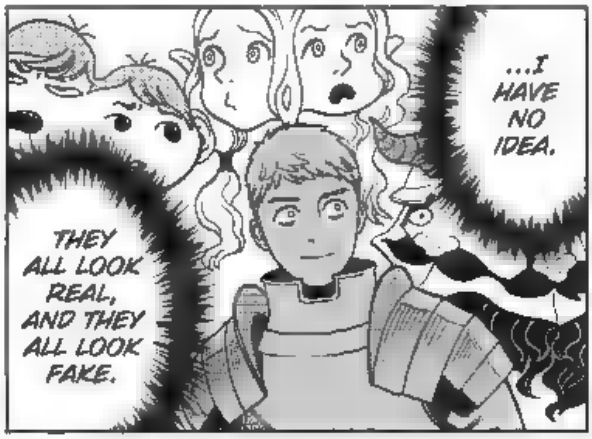
UM.
NOBODY'S MENTIONED IT, BUT JUST LET ME CHECK.

HUH!?
SENSHI ALWAYS LOOKS COOL.
LOOKS NORMAL TO ME.

HUH!?

NOTE: "SENSHI IS DASHING."
MEMO, MEMO.

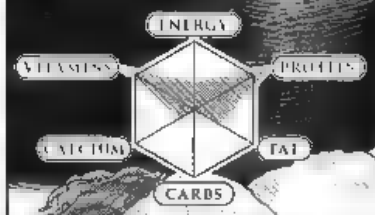
SENSHI DOESN'T LOOK THIS DOPEY.
WHAT'S THIS? PREJUDICE AGAINST DWARFS?

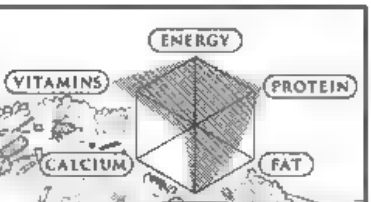


"Memories of the Fifth Floor" Pilaf

Ingredients

Rice	3½ go
Water	3½ go
Mandrake	1
Cockatrice meat (snake side)	300 g
Mushroom (not inspected)	3
Spices	To taste





Sweet Dryad

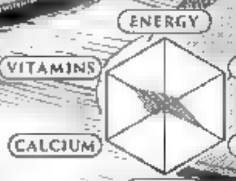
Ingredients

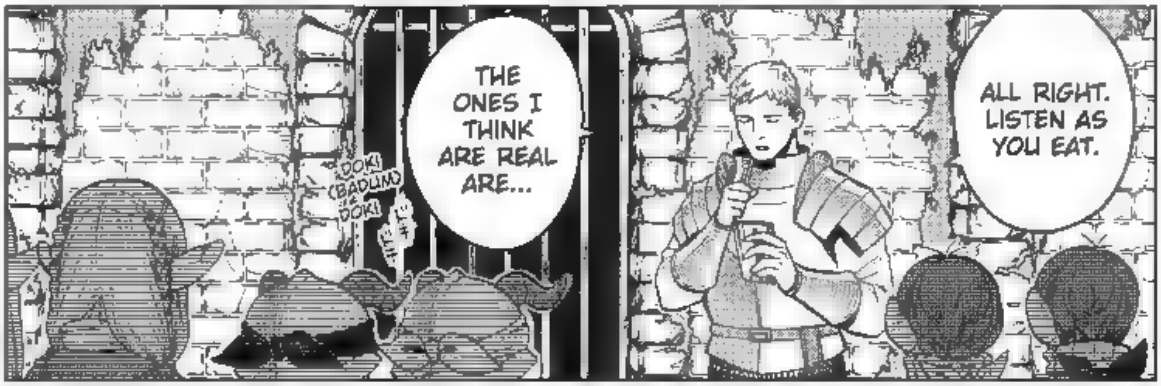
Dryad fruit	Half of 1
Butter	20 g
Spices	To taste
Egg yolk (harpy)	300 g

"The Whole Fifth Floor" Piccata

Ingredients

Cockatrice breast meat (snake side)	600 g
Beaten egg (harpy)	Half of 1
Spices	To taste
Dryad sauerkraut	As much as you like




THE ONES I THINK ARE REAL ARE...
DOK! (BADUM) DOK!
ALL RIGHT. LISTEN AS YOU EAT.

The self-seeking one with mean eyes.
CHIL-CHUCK A!

The one who won't eat harpy eggs, even if it is for Falin.
MAR-CILLE B!

The dopey one.
SENSHI A!

WAIT JUST ONE MINUTE!
W—
AND SO, IF THE IMPOSTERS WOULD PROMPTLY ENTER THE CELL...

I'LL EXPLAIN LATER.
LET'S DISPOSE OF THE FAKES FIRST.

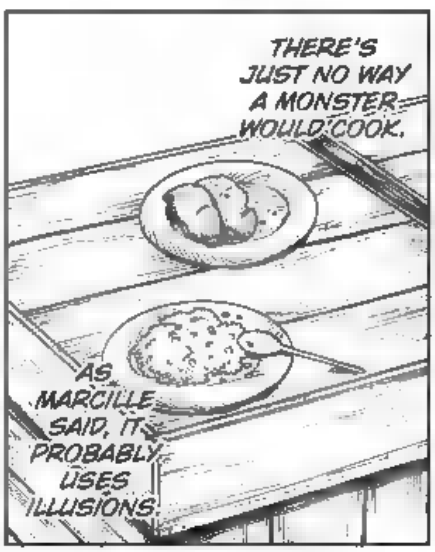
UM...
...JUST A HUNCH.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, THOSE ARE THE REAL ONES?
THEY'RE OBVIOUSLY THE FAKES!
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT WAY!?

I SUPPOSE...
...WE'LL JUST HAVE TO PROTECT OURSELVES.

"DISPOSE OF"...
I KNEW IT. THIS GUY'S NO GOOD.

J—
"JUST A HUNCH" !?


THERE'S JUST NO WAY A MONSTER WOULD COOK.
AS MARCILLE SAID, IT PROBABLY USES ILLUSIONS.

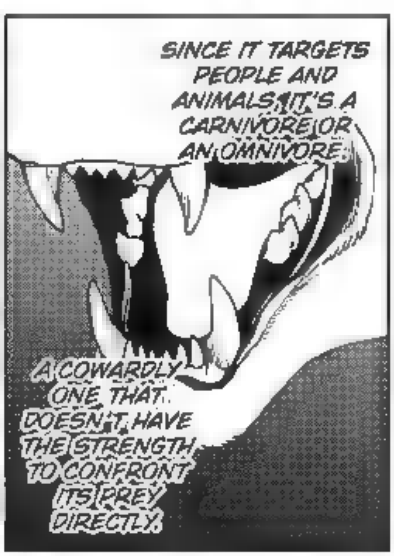
MONSTERS THAT IMITATE VOICES. MONSTERS THAT POSSESS. MONSTERS THAT CHANGE THEIR PHYSICAL FORMS.
"SHAPE-SHIFTER" IS A GENERAL TERM FOR MONSTERS THAT MIMIC OTHER FORMS.
THE TRUE IDENTITY OF THIS THING IS ONE OF THOSE.

NO MATTER WHOM I CHOSE, THIS WAS INEVITABLE.

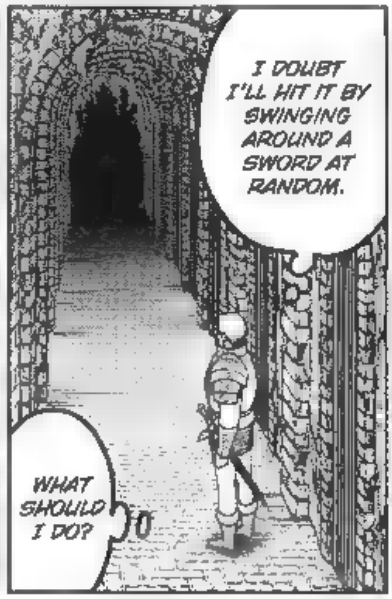
PERO (LICK)

DOWN-WIND IS THAT WAY.
GOOO (HWOOO)

THIS PLACE IS COLD AND DARK, AND VISIBILITY'S BAD.
IT'S AN ANIMAL THAT'S TOUGH AGAINST COLD. ONE THAT RELIES ON SMELL AND ITS SENSE OF HEARING.

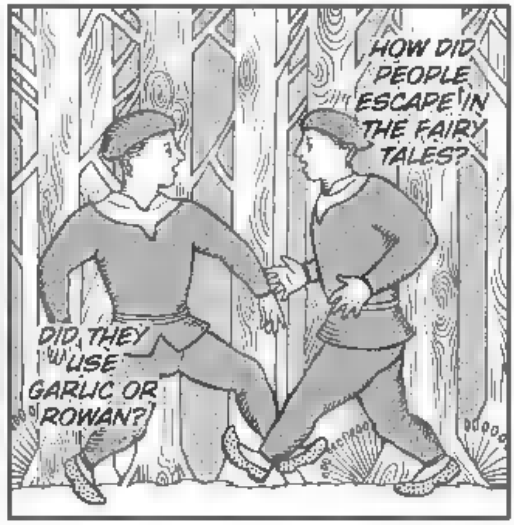

SINCE IT TARGETS PEOPLE AND ANIMALS, IT'S A CARNIVORE OR AN OMNIVORE.
A COWARDLY ONE THAT DOESN'T HAVE THE STRENGTH TO CONFRONT ITS PREY DIRECTLY.

KEN-SUKE'S REALLY QUIET.
THE COLD MIGHT KILL HIM.

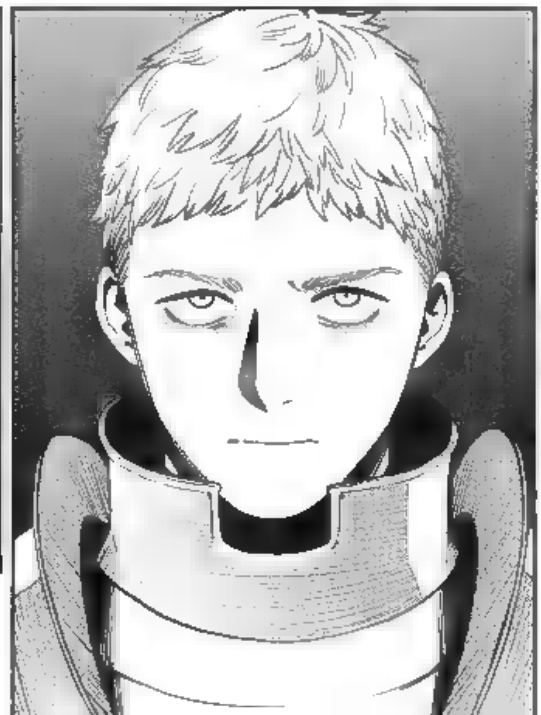

I DOUBT I'LL HIT IT BY SWINGING AROUND A SWORD AT RANDOM.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

THE ENEMY IS WAITING FOR US TO WEAR OUR-SELVES OUT.

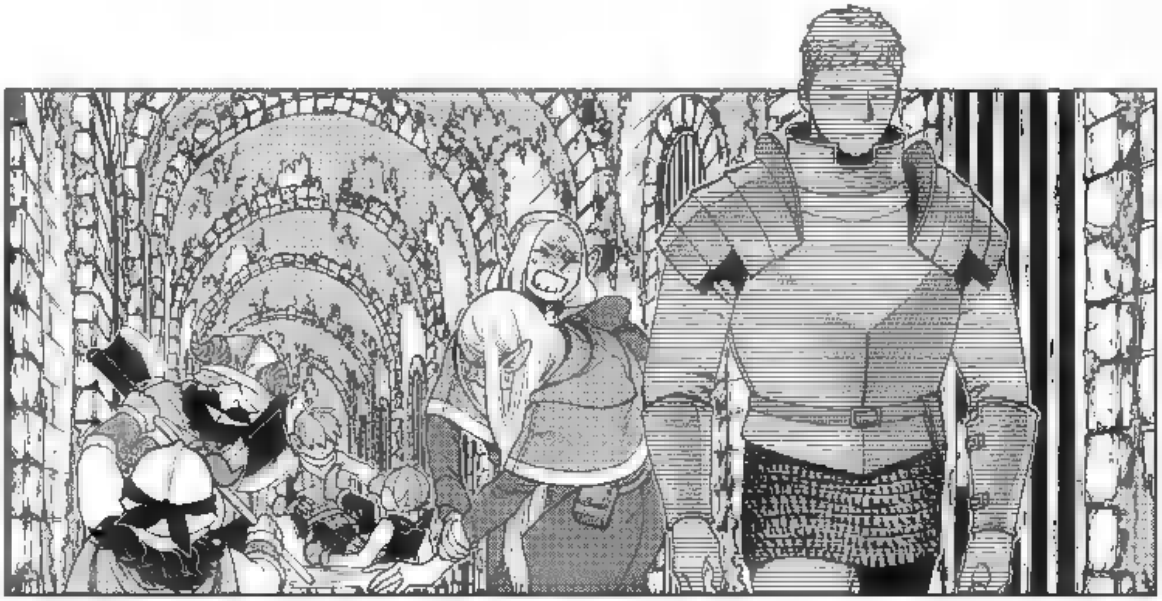
NO. THIS IS SIMPLER THAN THAT.
KACHA CLINK
TO FIGHT AN ANIMAL, YOU MUST FIGHT LIKE AN ANIMAL.
I JUST HAVE TO FLIP THE DYNAMIC FROM HUNTER TO HUNTED.


HOW DID PEOPLE ESCAPE IN THE FAIRY TALES?
DID THEY USE GARLIC OR ROWAN?

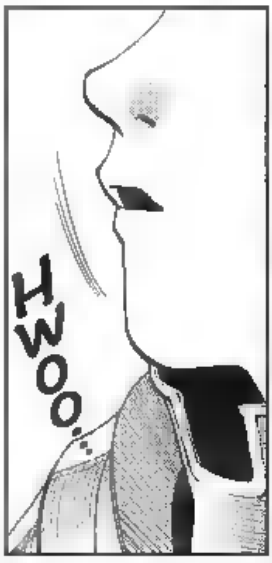
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, BUT...
...I'LL DO THAT.

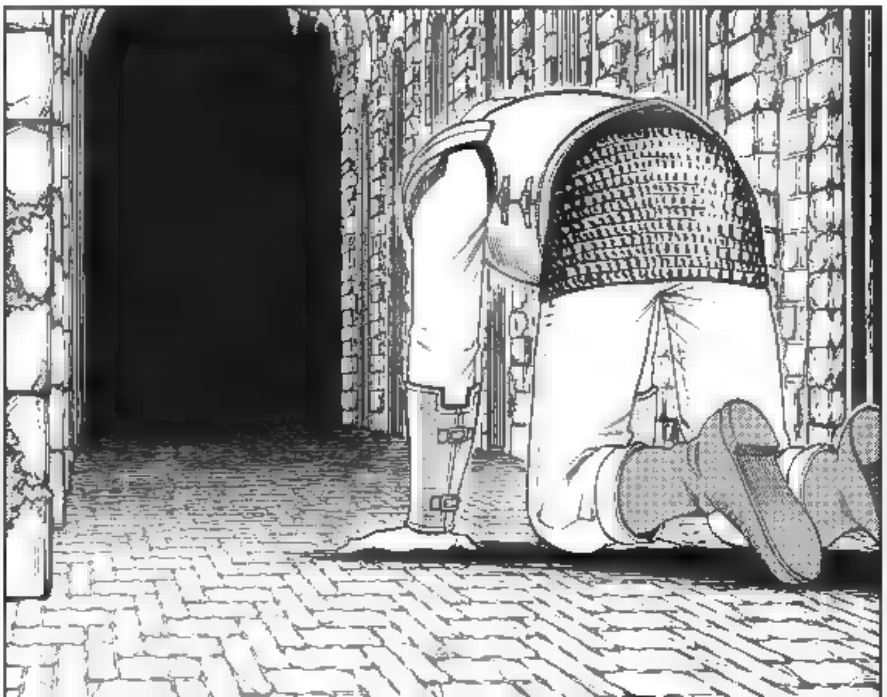


HAAH...
KOKI
KOKI OKRIKO



ぴた
HITA
(PAT)


HWOO...



ARF!
!?
ビクッ
BIKUU CRUNCH
WUFF!
WUFF!
WUFF!

MUIMUI
ANOUTOLIP
NUSSA
THEY TAUGHT ME ALL SORTS OF THINGS.
FUCCHI
DUSTRAG
BOFF
FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I'VE LIVED WITH DOGS.

A-A DOG... NO!!
IS THAT A HUNTING DOG!!?
HE'S GOOD!

HOW TO TACKLE A THREAT THAT IS STRONGER THAN YOUR GROUP.
HOW TO HUNT.

...THAT YOU ARE NOT THE HUNTER. YOU ARE THE HUNTED.
RUFF!
SHUBA (VWIP)
SHUBABA
WUFF!
WOOF!
WOOF!
I'LL TEACH YOU...
HE'S A DOG.
REALLY GOOD.
HE'S GOOD.

ZA (SHFFA)
ZA
ZA
ZA
ZA
ZA

YOU GUYS! LOOK!
THE ILLU-SION IS...

GUNYA (WARP)

THERE YOU ARE.
GRRRR...
IF YOU'RE A BEAST, THEN YOU KNOW FULL WELL.
IN THIS FIGHT...
GRR
RR
GRRRA
ARR

...WHOEVER FLINCHES LOSES!
LAIOOOS !!

DON
(BLAM)
BATA
(PLUMP)
DOSA
(WHUMP)

...WHY DIDN'T YOU DRAW YOUR SWORD?
CHIRI (SIZZLE)
CHIRI
I GOT A LITTLE TOO INTO THE ROLE.

YOU ALIVE, LAIOS?
...AND ARE YOU SANE?
THERE'S A TON OF STUFF I WANT TO SAY, BUT...
YEAH.
CHON (POKE)

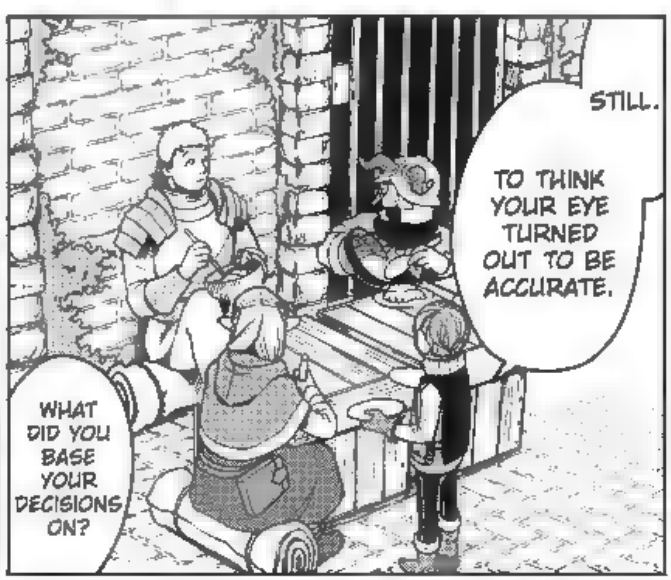
F.WOO.
.....

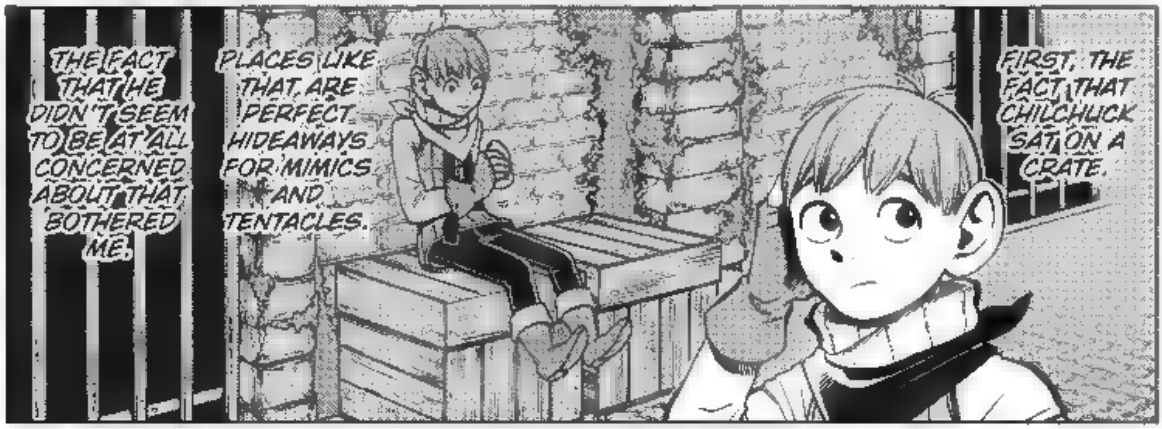
NONE OF THE FOOD IS READY.
WELL, IT WAS MADE WITH ILLUSIONS, AFTER ALL.
LET'S MAKE IT AGAIN.

AAAH!

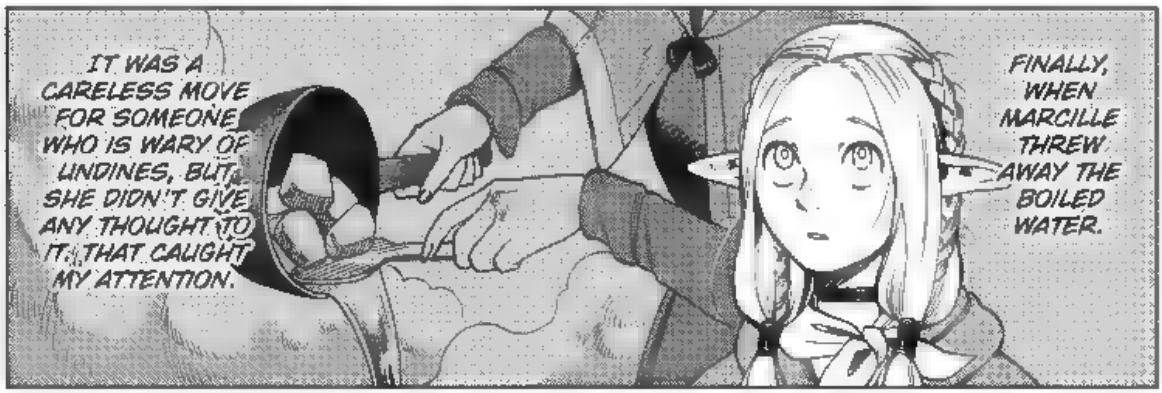
?

THE SENSE OF DISTANCE FROM MONSTERS, MAYBE?

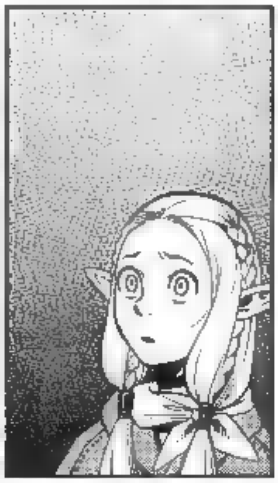

STILL.
TO THINK YOUR EYE TURNED OUT TO BE ACCURATE.
WHAT DID YOU BASE YOUR DECISIONS ON?


THE FACT THAT HE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE AT ALL CONCERNED ABOUT THAT BOTHERED ME.
PLACES LIKE THAT ARE PERFECT HIDEAWAYS FOR MIMICS AND TENTACLES.
FIRST, THE FACT THAT CHILCHUCK SAT ON A CRATE.

COMING FROM SOMEONE WHO VALUES BALANCED ECOSYSTEMS, IT SEEMED A BIT THOUGHTLESS.
THE WAY SENSHI SAID HE "TOOK ALL THAT WAS THERE."


IT WAS A CARELESS MOVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS WARY OF UNDINES, BUT SHE DIDN'T GIVE ANY THOUGHT TO IT. THAT CAUGHT MY ATTENTION.
FINALLY, WHEN MARCILLE THREW AWAY THE BOILED WATER.

IN THIS CASE, THAT CARELESSNESS SEEMED MORE LIKE THE REAL MARCILLE TO ME.
AH.....!!!
HUH.



THAT ONE TRICK KEPT IT FED, AFTER ALL.
STILL, SEEING THROUGH THE ILLUSIONS WAS COMPLETELY IMPOSSIBLE.
A FOX...?

WELL DONE. MY OPINION OF YOU HAS RISEN, LAIOS.
ALTHOUGH HIS PERSPECTIVE'S A BIT OFF.

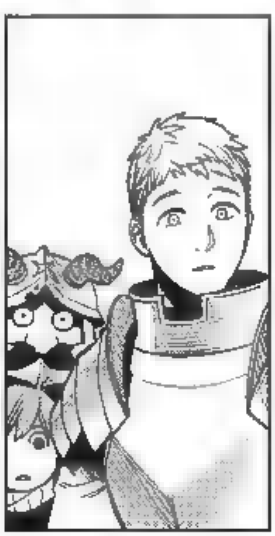
I MEAN, WE'VE NEVER EATEN FISHMAN EGGS!
RIGHT?

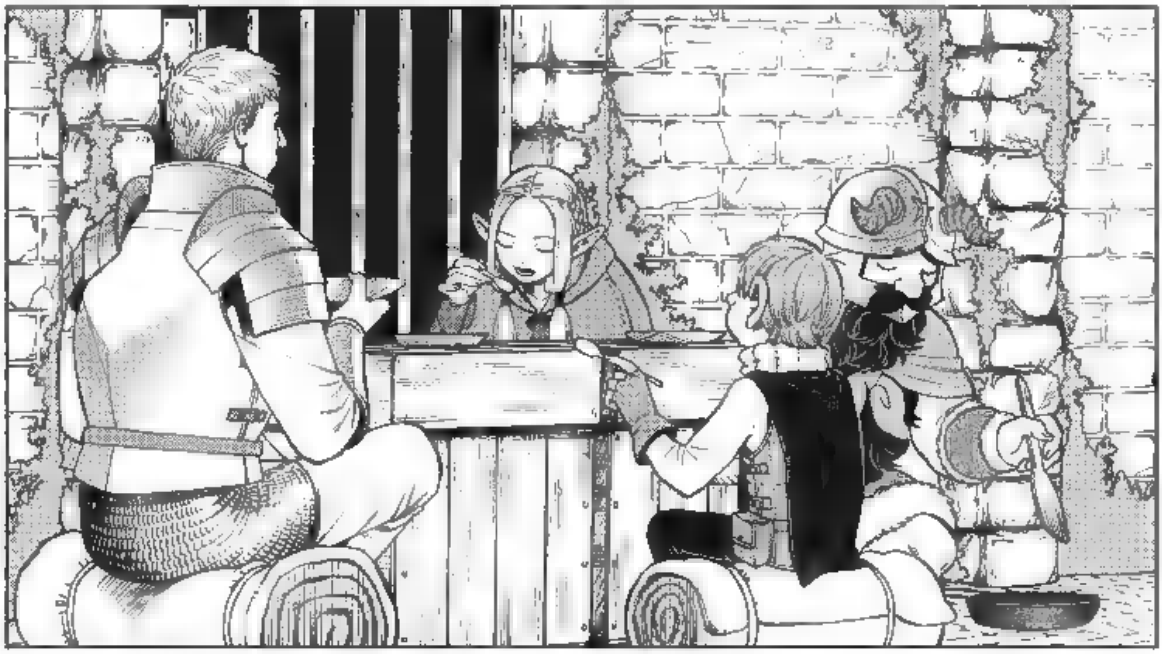
I JUST ASSUMED ...

I'VE EATEN FISH-MAN EGGS AND DRYADS.
...THAT YOU'D NOTICED THAT LINE.

YUM!
AH...!!!
I WONDER IF IT WAS THAT PORRIDGE ...

SUU CFSHID





WE HAVEN'T HAD SWEETS IN A WHILE. THEY'RE GOOD.
HAFF...

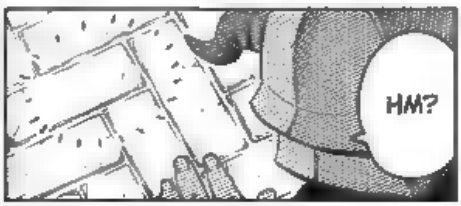
YAY!

I BAKED DESSERT TOO.
SWEET DRYAD.

YOU'RE SURE YOU DIDN'T MISPLACE IT?
NO, I KNOW IT WAS HERE.

I PUT THE FOOD BAG HERE, AND IT'S GONE.

SHOULD I MAKE SOME TEA?
THERE WERE TEA LEAVES IN THE PROVISIONS WE GOT...


HM?

THAT'S RICE...

DROP YOUR WEAPONS AND FREEZE.

LET'S HAVE A NICE, PEACEFUL CHAT, SHALL WE?

CHAPTER 40: THE END

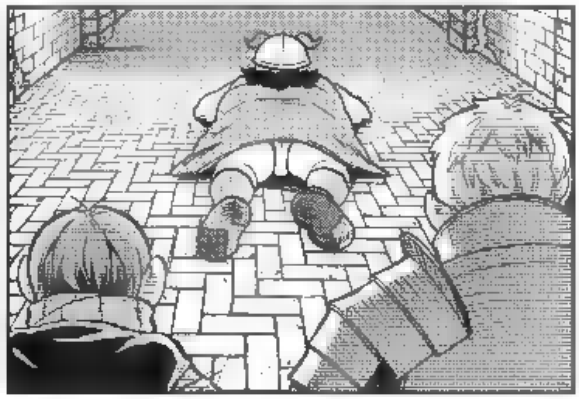
41. Hag

IF YOU MOVE EVEN A LITTLE, I'LL KILL HER.
TAKE FIVE STEPS BACK, THEN GET DOWN.
NOT THIS AGAIN ...

KARAN (CLANK)
カラン

SHE WAS...
...ONE OF SHURO'S HANGERS-ON, WASN'T SHE?
WAS SHE FOLLOWING US ALL THIS TIME?

BRRR.



THE SPELL THAT'S ON ME.
HURRY UP!
PUBU (JAB)
TCK...

GET THIS SPELL OFF.
HUH?

YOU.
GUI (TUG)

ANCIENT MAGIC!!
...AT LEAST TELL ME WHAT IT'S CAST ON...
...AND WHAT KIND OF SPELL IT IS.

CAN'T YOU TELL BY LOOKING!?
YOU'RE A BLACK MAGICIAN, RIGHT?

WHA...
WHAT SORT OF SPELL ARE YOU UNDER?

SHURU (UNWRAP)
AND THE OTHER'S ...
THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF SPELL ON ME.
ONE'S ON MY NECK.
SHURU

OH...!

TCH!

BASA (SHUFF)

...ALL OVER.

ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?
IF THE CASTER DOESN'T TOUCH IT WITHIN A SET TIME FRAME, IT ACTIVATES.

THE ONE ON YOUR NECK...
IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S WRITTEN IN THE EASTERN TONGUE.
WHAT SORT OF SPELL IS IT?

A-ALL RIGHT.
I'LL DO WHAT I CAN.

WHO KNOWS?
YOU MIGHT WANT TO HURRY.
YOU DON'T WANT TO DIE WITH ME, DO YOU?

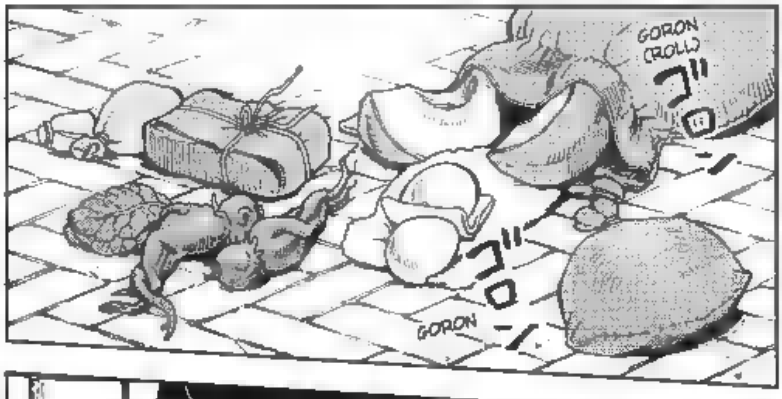
YIKES.
IS THE CASTER THAT MAIZURU PERSON?
HOW MUCH LEEWAY IS THERE?
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU RUN OUT OF TIME?

I THINK I CAN REMOVE IT.
MM-HM.

THE WRITING IS PECULIAR...
...BUT THIS MIGHT BE A REPURPOSED GNOME SPELL.

DON'T TRY ANYTHING FUNNY.
I CAN KILL YOU ANYTIME I WANT.
I KNOW...
ONCE YOU LIFT THIS, I'LL LET YOU GO.

HEY, YOU. BRAT.
GIMME SOMETHING TO EAT.


GORON (ROLL)
ゴロ
ゴロ
GORON

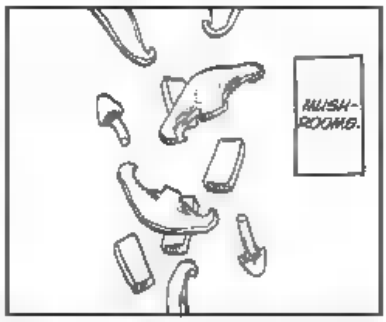
GOGO (RUMMAGE)
ごそ
GOGO
ごそ

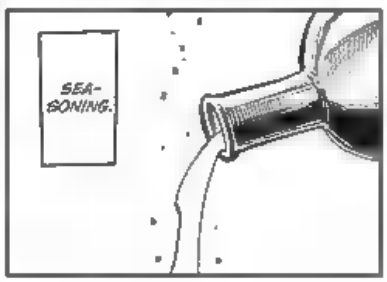
KUCHA (SMACK)
KUCHA
GATSU (GNARF)
GATSU
HAGU (CHAMP)
HAGU
GA (CHAMP)
FIELD RATION PELLET
!
HEY, DON'T YOU MOVE!
BA (YANK)
DON'T MESS WITH M—
KOFF!
IF YOU GULP IT DOWN LIKE THAT, IT WILL STICK IN YOUR THROAT.
WHEN DID YOU LAST EAT?
SHUT UP.
SO (SHIP)
LET ME MAKE YOU SOMETHING HOT.
I'LL FIX YOU SOMETHING. THAT'S ALL I'LL DO.
YOU NEED TO MOISTEN YOUR THROAT.
HACK!
KAFF!
KOFF!
HACK!
OF COURSE YOU CHOKED.
WHAT YOU JUST INHALED WAS BASICALLY A BALL OF FLOUR.
BGH!

HMM...
HARPY
DRYAD
MANDRAKES
COCKATRICE
...ALL RIGHT.
TRY TO FEED ME MONSTERS, AND I KILL YOU.
CHOP THE MUSH-ROOMS INTO BITE-SIZE PIECES.
PROBABLY IMAGINING IT.
TON (CHOP)
TON
EEEEEK!
IT'S BEGINNING TO GROW FOOTLIKE THINGS?
THE MUSHROOMS I PICKED NEAR THE DRYADS WERE...
HM?
SAUTÉ RICE, BUTTER, AND GARLIC.
HMM.
WHEN YOU CAN'T SEE THE FIRE, IT JUST DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT.
I CAN'T FEEL ANY HEAT. IS IT STILL USABLE?
FIRE...
MAYBE I'LL USE THE MAGIC CIRCLE MARCILLE MADE FOR THE COOKING EARLIER.

FUTSU
FUTSU (BURBLE)

NO VEGE-TABLES, AND I CAN'T USE MEAT OR EGGS.
ADD WATER AND SIMMER FOR A WHILE.
IT'S GOING TO BE VERY PLAIN...

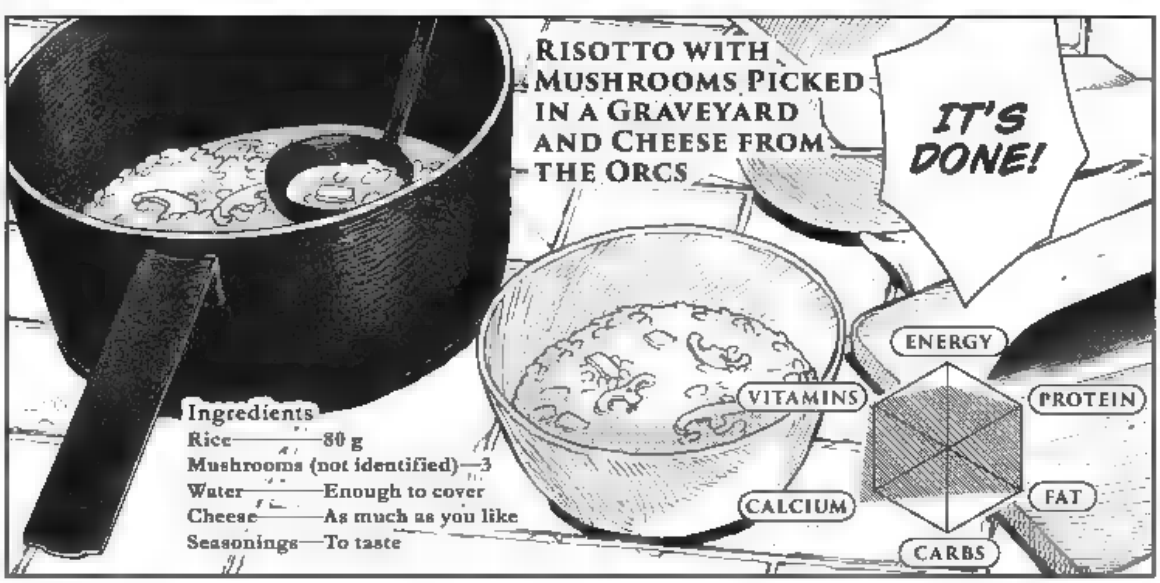

MUSH-ROOMS.


SEA-SONING.

I'LL ADD SOME CHEESE, AT LEAST.
WHAT A WASTE.

IF I CAN'T MAKE ANYTHING BETTER THAN THIS, I'M INCOMPETENT, PITIFUL.
EITHER WAY, I CAN'T STAND SEEING YOUNG PEOPLE GO HUNGRY.

HMM?


RISOTTO WITH MUSHROOMS PICKED IN A GRAVEYARD AND CHEESE FROM THE ORCS
IT'S DONE!
Ingredients
Rice——80 g
Mushrooms (not identified)—3
Water——Enough to cover
Cheese——As much as you like
Seasonings—To taste
ENERGY
PROTEIN
FAT
CARBS
CALCIUM
VITAMINS

GOKURI (GULP)
DOWNWIND
ふわ
FUWA (WAFT)
WHO'D EAT STUFF LIKE...?
I'LL JUST SET IT HERE.
コト
KOTO (TUNK)
SUN (SNIFF)
SUN
HMPH.
がしっ
GASHI (GRAB)
NAME (SLUP)
なめ
なめ
NAME
BEERO
べろ
BERO
BERORI CLICK
べろ
!!?
KUCHA
くちゃ
くちゃ
くちゃ
KUCHA (SMACK) KUCHA

...HAS TERRIBLE TABLE MANNERS !!
GIMME MORE!
THIS KID...
SHE JUST WASN'T RAISED RIGHT.
YOU'RE NOT USED TO STUFF LIKE THAT?
WHAT GREAT POSTURE.
KUCHA KUCHA
IS EASTERN ETIQUETTE THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF OURS?
NO. WE NEVER SAW SHURO EAT LIKE THAT.
SU (SHF)
SU SU
SUUU (SLOW)
JI (STARE)
TORORI (GLOOP)

AH

POTORI
(PLOP)

A PICKY EATER!

THIS... HASN'T HAPPENED BEFORE.

SEN-SHI...

I HATE MUSH-ROOMS.
WHAT DID YOU JUST...?
PECHA (SMACK)
PECHA

HEY. COME ANY CLOSER, AND I MURDER YOU.
HUHN ?

HOLD YOUR SPOON PROPER-LY.

PIKU (PERK)
YOUR SPOON.

...AND PICK UP WHAT YOU JUST THREW ON THE FLOOR.
HOLD YOUR SPOON PROPERLY...
AH!!
WHAT THE HELL...?
BA (LUNGE)
W-WAIT JUST A—
ZOWA (RUSTLE)
NO, DON'T!
MOVING WHILE I'M UNDOING SPELL IS DANGERO—
ZO
ZO
ZO (ZIT)

ZO (LOOM)
ZO
ZO
ZO
ZO
ZO

BUON (SWIPE)
GORON (GROWL)
GORON
GORO

GUII (YANK)
グイイ…
GU (GRAB)
グッ…
SPOONS ARE HELD LIKE THIS.
SENSHI! BEHIND YOU! BEHIND YOU!
HOW-EVER...
I BET IT IS.
BEING FORCED TO HOLD IT IN AN UNFAMILIAR WAY MUST BE A NUISANCE.
SHA (HISSS)
I CAN HOLD IT ANY WAY I WANT!
THIS WAY'S EASIEST FOR ME!

KA
KA
KA
KA
AH!
HUH?
SENSHI, BE CARE-FUL!
THAT FELT LIKE NOTHING.
O
...IT'S MADE OF PAPER !?
GAAN (CLANG)
H

KEH
KEH
KEH
KEH

KA
KA
KA
KA
KA
KA!

IT'S USED TO CUT MEAT.
ITS BLADE IS LONG AND SHARP. IT LOOKS TERRIFYING, BUT IT'S THIN AND DELICATE.
THAT'S A CARVING KNIFE.
SU (POINT)
...LOOK.

GAN (CLANG)
SEN-SHII
BASHII (SMACK)
IF YOU BRANDISH IT WITH A GRIP LIKE THAT, WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENS?

PAN (SNAP)
PI (KRIK)
PI

...YOU WON'T BRING OUT THE TOOL'S FULL ABILITIES, AND YOU MAY PUT YOURSELF AT A DISADVANTAGE!
AS YOU CAN SEE...

DON (BAM)

RA RA RA!

GYAGIGIGIGI (SCRAAAPE)

BOBOBO (BLAZE)
JIJI (SIZZLE)
GASUN (WHUMP)
SENSHI!
NOW, LAIOS!
AHA
AHA
AHA

I APOLOGIZE FOR STARTLING YOU.
BUT...

...WHY ARE THERE GOOD AND BAD WAYS TO HOLD TOOLS?
I WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT THAT.

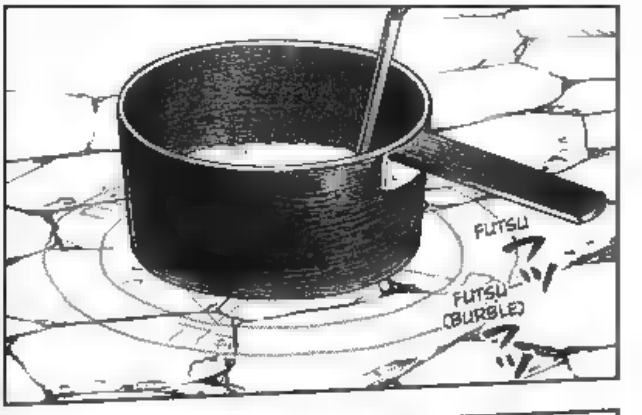
ARE YOU HURT, CAT-GIRL?

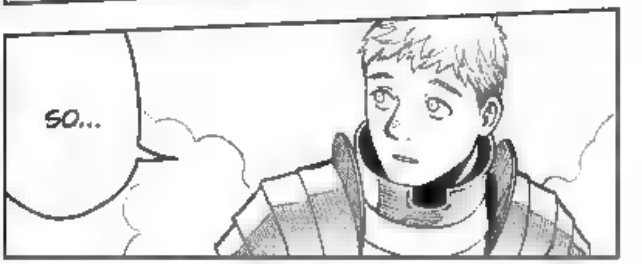
THE FOOD'S GONE COLD.
LET'S GET IT WARMED UP AGAIN.

PON (TMP)
ほん

THINK ABOUT NOT MOVING WHILE SPELLS ARE BEING UNDONE TOO.
IF THAT ONE HAD BEEN NASTIER, WHO KNOWS WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED?

...WHY DID YOU FOLLOW US?


FUTSU
FUTSU (BURBLE)


SO...

NOT UNTIL I RAN INTO...

...I COULDN'T FIND ANYBODY WHO USED IT.
I KNEW THEY WERE BLACK MAGIC, BUT...

I'VE BEEN HUNTING FOR A WAY TO BREAK MY CURSES FOR AGES.
PERO CUCIO

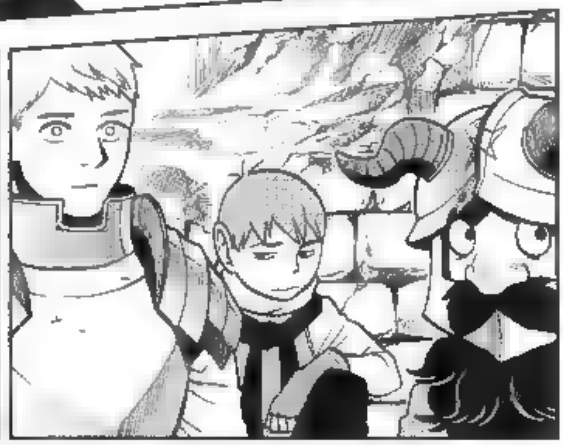
MY RESEARCH INVOLVES DRAWING ENERGY FROM OTHER DIMEN-SIONS...
THERE ARE SEVERAL KINDS OF BLA— ANCIENT MAGIC.

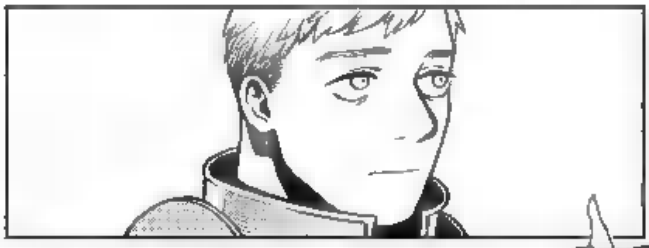
I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT!
AFTER ALL...
DON'T GIVE ME THAT!

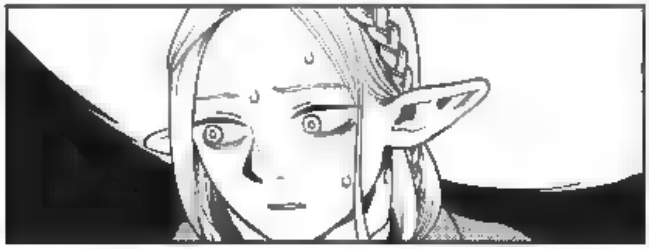
...THAT LONG-EARS OVER THERE.

...YOU ACTUALLY DID IT.
YOU MADE A GROTESQUE [redacted] HUMAN AND A MONSTER WITH BLACK MAGIC.

AND!
YOU PEOPLE ARE GOING THROUGH THE DUNGEON TO BREAK THE CURSE ON THAT LADY, RIGHT?
IN OTHER WORDS...
...YOU KNOW HOW YOU'RE GOING TO DO IT, RIGHT!?



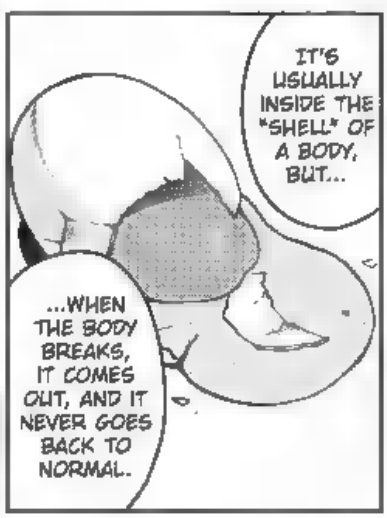




THAT MEANS YOU CAN BREAK MINE TOO!!
C'MON, EVICT THIS BEAST SOUL THAT POSSESSED ME!!

HUH?
I'M SORRY.
THAT'S...
...NOT SOMETHING I CAN DO ANYTHING ABOUT.

A SPELL IN THIS DUNGEON CREATES A THICK MEMBRANE INSIDE THE SHELL...
...SO EVEN IF THE BODY IS DAMAGED, THE SOUL WON'T LEAVE.


IT'S USUALLY INSIDE THE "SHELL" OF A BODY, BUT...
...WHEN THE BODY BREAKS, IT COMES OUT, AND IT NEVER GOES BACK TO NORMAL.

THERE'S STILL A LOT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE SOUL, BUT...
...THEY OFTEN SAY IT'S LIKE AN EGG.

ONCE MIXED TOGETH-ER...
...SOULS NEVER GO BACK TO THE WAY THEY WERE.

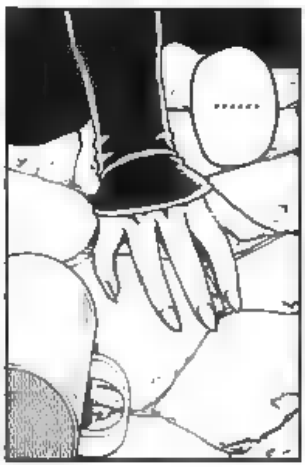
RIGHT NOW, YOU AND FALIN...
...HAVE TWO SETS OF "CONTENTS" IN ONE SHELL.

...UH...
HUH?
THEN...
...WHY ARE YOU...
...STILL TRAVELING?

I KNEW THAT, BUT HEARING IT SAID FLAT-OUT IS...

ALSO, IF WE GO BACK UP NOW, THEY'LL ARREST US FOR USING BLACK MAGIC.
SHURO WILL PROBABLY REPORT THIS TO THE LORD OF THE ISLAND.
ALTHOUGH, I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'LL SAY.

SHE MIGHT KILL THE NEXT ADVENTURERS SHE MEETS...
...OR THEY MIGHT KILL HER.
WE WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS BEFORE THEN.
...UMM...
FOR ONE THING, WE CAN'T LEAVE MY LITTLE SISTER LIKE THAT.


.....

NO...
THEN I'LL...
... ALWAYS BE...

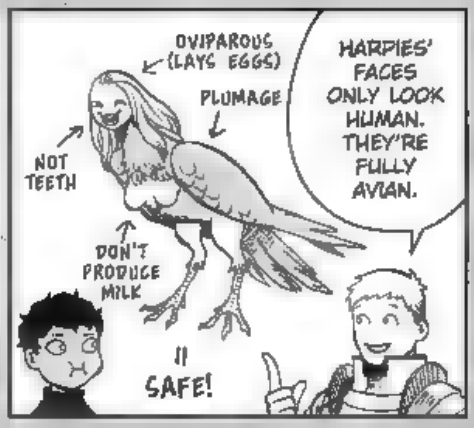
...I'M REALLY GLAD I MET YOU!
IT'S WEIRD FOR ME TO SAY THIS, BUT...
BUT ...!!
EVEN SO!

...BUT WHAT YOU DO AND SAY LOOKS PERFECTLY HUMAN...
...AND YOU HAVE NO DRIVE TO KILL!
...I DON'T KNOW WHAT MONSTER YOU'RE MIXED WITH...
I MEAN ...

JUST HAVING LEARNED THAT IS, UM...
IT MAKES ME REALLY HAPPY.
...IF SHE'S FREED FROM THE DUNGEON'S CONTROL.
...MAY REGAIN HER OLD PERSONALITY...
IF YOU TURN THAT AROUND, EVEN FALIN...

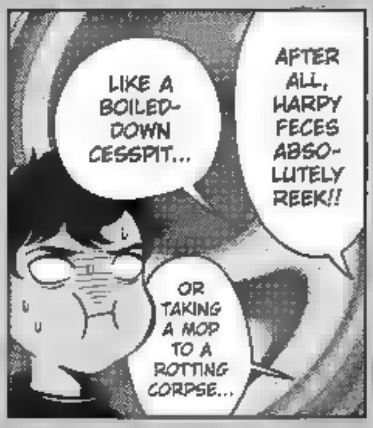
...BUT WHY NOT THINK OF THIS POSITIVELY, AS THE HAND OF FATE AT WORK?
IT MAY NOT BE QUITE WHAT YOU HOPED FOR...
HERE.
...WE MAY LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT SEPARATING SOULS.
IF WE ASK...
THE LORD OF THE DUNGEON IS FAR BETTER WITH ANCIENT MAGIC THAN I AM.
THEN...?
THAT'S JUST WHAT I GO BY.
FWOO!
HWOO!
IZU-TSUMI.
EITHER WAY, YOU CAN'T GET BACK TO THE SURFACE ON YOUR OWN, RIGHT?
WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS? ASEBI?
...WHAT?
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE RECRUIT-ING ME.
MY NAME'S IZUTSUMI.
DON'T FORGET IT.

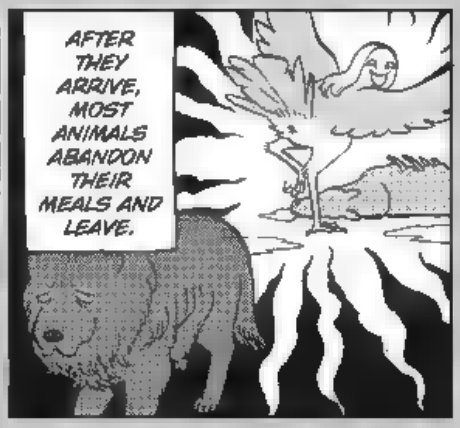
THEY'RE NOISY AND MESSY...
...AND THEY POOP EVERY-WHERE!
THEY TEND TO HORN ■ ON OTHER CREATURES' MEALS.

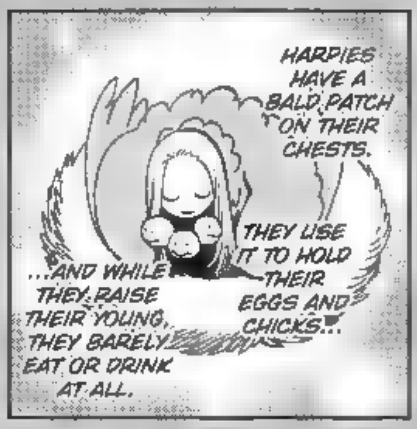

OVIPAROUS (LAYS EGGS)
PLUMAGE
NOT TEETH
DON'T PRODUCE MILK
HARPIES' FACES ONLY LOOK HUMAN. THEY'RE FULLY AVIAN.
SAFE!

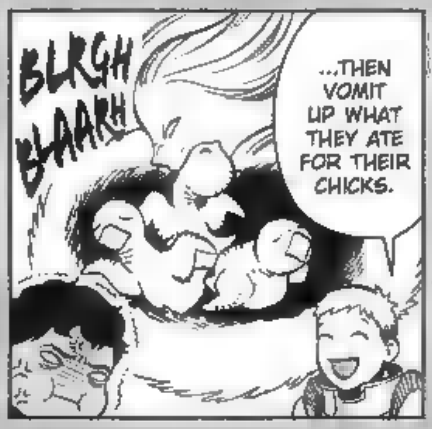
HARPY
MISC. MONSTER TALES 6

GATSU (SCARF)
GATSU
THEN THEY EAT THE FOOD THAT WAS LEFT BEHIND.


LIKE A BOILED-DOWN CESSPIT...
AFTER ALL, HARPY FECES ABSO-LUTELY REEK!!
OR TAKING A MOP TO A ROTTING CORPSE...


AFTER THEY ARRIVE, MOST ANIMALS ABANDON THEIR MEALS AND LEAVE.


HARPIES HAVE A BALD PATCH ON THEIR CHESTS.
THEY USE IT TO HOLD THEIR EGGS AND CHICKS...
...AND WHILE THEY RAISE THEIR YOUNG, THEY BARELY EAT OR DRINK AT ALL.


BLRGH BLAARH
...THEN VOMIT UP WHAT THEY ATE FOR THEIR CHICKS.

ONCE THEIR BELLIES ARE FULL...
...THEY RETURN TO THEIR NEST...

BOKO
BOKO
BOKO
BOKO (WHOK)
"BIRDS DON'T FOUL THE NESTS THEY LEAVE" ■ A VERY APT PROVERB.

THE PARENT EATS THE CHICKS' FECES TOO, SO THE NEST STAYS SURPRISINGLY CLEAN.
GOKURI (GULP)

...BUT I WISH THEY'D NOTICE THE DEEP AFFECTION HARPIES HAVE FOR THEIR YOUNG.
PEOPLE OFTEN SAY THEY'RE UNPLEAS-ANT BIRDS...

THEN THE BABYSITTER DOLL WOULD APPEAR AND RETURN THE YOUNG MASTER TO THE HOUSE.
WHEN HE LEFT MY SIDE FOR A SET TIME, IT WOULD ACTIVATE.
HMM.
AS A COUNTER-MEASURE, I CREATED THIS SPELL.
NINJA ART: BABYSITTER
A MOMENT'S CARELESS-NESS ON MY PART, AND HE WOULD VANISH.
YOUNG MASTER!
LONG AGO, THE YOUNG MASTER WAS A TERRIBLY ACTIVE CHILD.
HERE SHE GOES AGAIN...
HAG
I WAS IN THE BATHROOM, DOING MY BUSINESS, WHEN...
RRGH...
TWENTY YEARS AGO
THE BOY'S IN THE FIREPIT.
I RAN AROUND FRANTICALLY, USING NINJA TECHNIQUES I'D JUST LEARNED.
WHEN I FINALLY SCUTTLED TO MY FATHER'S SIDE IN A PANIC...
MAIZURU TRULY COULDN'T BE HAPPIER.
BUT LOOK HOW SPLENDID HE'S BECOME.
...AND THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO THIS TALE.
EVEN THEN, WHEN I LOST SIGHT OF HIM, MY HEART WOULD FREEZE...
SO THAT WAS HER DOING...
I USED AN IMPROVED VERSION OF THAT SPELL ON ASEBI.
MY FATHER TOASTED MOCHI OVER THAT FIRE...
...THEN POLISHED IT OFF.

I GUESS SHE COULDN'T SEE THE ILLUSIONS FROM OUTSIDE THE SPELL.

I SEE.

TON (CHOP) TON

CLEARLY A FAKE!

SO, AFTER I'D WATCHED YOU FOR A WHILE...

...YOU STARTED TALKING TO EMPTY SPACE...

...AND MESSING AROUND WITH LEAVES.

SHAPESHIFTER

I WON'T GET MAD.

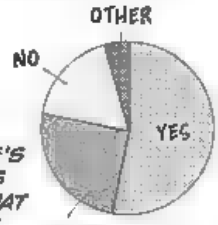
IF ONE OF YOU HAS SOMETHING TO SAY, I WISH YOU'D SPEAK UP.

THEN THAT "ME" REALLY WAS HOW ONE OF YOU THREE SEES ME.

THE BREAKUP RATE OF PARTIES THAT TRY TO FIGURE IT OUT IS A FULL 25% HIGHER THAN PARTIES THAT DON'T.

HOWEVER, THE RESULT MAY NOT BE WHAT YOU WISH IT WAS.

Q. Did you look for the culprit behind a shapeshifter illusion?



EVERYONE'S CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT OTHERS THINK OF THEM.

THIS IS THE ONE THING YOU ABSOLUTELY SHOULD NOT DO.

HUNTING FOR CULPRITS.

LET'S MEET A FEW OF THEM.

...THERE ARE OTHER MONSTERS THAT MIMIC HUMAN FORMS.

YES, LIVING THINGS HAVE MANY SHAPES.

WHICH IS TO SAY...

THEY MAY BE WRONG IN SOME WAYS AND RIGHT IN OTHERS.

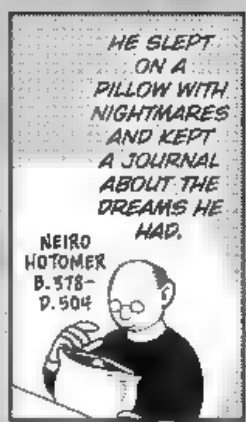
EVERYONE SEES THINGS DIFFERENTLY.

THEN I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO TELL THEM APART BY POKING THEIR EYES.
IF THAT'S TRUE... IF ONE TURNED INTO YOU, I'M NOT CONFIDENT I COULD TELL.
FUN! (POKE)
MARCH! MARCH!
STAYS CALM
THEY ALMOST NEVER IMITATE HUMANS, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTED CASES.
HOWEVER, THEY AREN'T INTELLIGENT, AND THEIR MOVEMENTS ARE UNNATURAL, SO THEY'RE PROBABLY EASY TO SPOT.
A TYPE OF SLIME THAT MIMICS CREATURES EXACTLY, THEN MINGLES WITH GROUPS.
FIRST, THE CLASSIC!
I'D SEE A YOUNG WOMAN, OBVIOUSLY.
WHAT AM I, AN INFANT!?
CHILDREN LIKE CHIL PROBABLY [redacted] THEIR PARENTS.
I SEE.
THEY GENERALLY RELY ON SEX APPEAL...
...BUT SOME HAVE REPORTED SEEING THEM AS DISTANT RELATIVES OR DEVOTEES.
...THEN BECOMES THEIR IDEAL BEING AND TEMPTS THEM.
NEXT, LIKE OUR SHIFTER, THIS ONE READS HUMAN MINDS...
THAT'S UNFORGIVABLE.
COME TO THINK OF IT, SOMEBODY MADE A LAIOS THAT LOOKED JUST LIKE FALIN!!
THEY LOOK NOTHING ALIKE.
...AND WHEN THEY LET THEIR GUARD DOWN, THE MONSTER SWITCHES WITH THEM.
THEY USE HONEYED WORDS AND ILLUSIONS TO ATTRACT THE INTEREST OF THEIR PREY...
AH!
MIRROR MONSTERS.
THEY IMITATE THE FORM REFLECTED IN THEM.
I DON'T FEEL SO GREAT ...
THAT EXCHANGE SORT OF SAYS IT ALL...
SO HE SAYS, BUT...
DRAT.
YAWN...
...SO IT'S BEST NOT TO WORRY ABOUT IT!
...GOING ROUND AND [redacted] WITH ACCUSATIONS PLAYS RIGHT INTO THEIR HANDS...
ANYWAY ...
SERIOUSLY, IT'S A MYSTERY.
I'D LOVE TO HEAR WHY.
THEY DON'T LOOK REMOTELY LIKE EACH OTHER.
PEOPLE SAY THAT SOMETIMES, AND I REALLY DON'T GET IT.

THEY SAY THEIR FACES ARE TWISTED IN TERROR...
THE BIGGER THE SHEN GETS, THE MORE EXTREME THE BAD DREAMS.
IN THE END, THEIR HOST FALLS INTO AN ETERNAL SLEEP.

A SHEN LURKS IN PEOPLE'S PILLOWS, GIVES THEM DREAMS...
...AND FEEDS ON THE EMOTIONS (SPIRITUAL ENERGY) THAT THE DREAMS GENERATE.

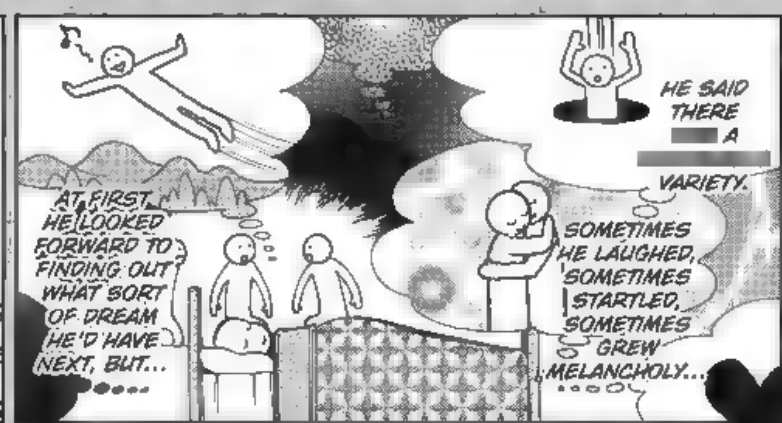
SHEN (NIGHTMARE)


HE SLEPT ON A PILLOW WITH NIGHTMARES AND KEPT A JOURNAL ABOUT THE DREAMS HE HAD.
NEIRO HOTOMER B.378– D.504

SOMEONE ALREADY CHECKED INTO THAT.
I'D HAVE ALL THE FUN DREAMS THEY WANTED.
IF THEY JUST NEED TO STIR UP EMOTIONS, THERE ARE OTHER WAYS.

WHY BAD DREAMS?

TRA LA LAAAA...
JINGLE DINGLE INGLE INGLE...
TWEEDLE OODLE...
TRA LAAAAA...


AT FIRST, HE LOOKED FORWARD TO FINDING OUT WHAT SORT OF DREAM HE'D HAVE NEXT, BUT...
HE SAID THERE A VARIETY.
SOMETIMES HE LAUGHED, SOMETIMES STARTLED, SOMETIMES GREW MELANCHOLY...

NO WAY.
I DON'T THIS AT ALL.
THIS IS ONE OF MARCILLE'S DREAMS, RIGHT?
MAYBE IT'S AN OLD DREAM?

WHAT'S THIS?
SOMETHING'S STARTING.

IN THE SILHOUETTE...
...OF THE FLOWERS THAT BLOOOOM...
...IN THE TWIIILIGHT...

EPISODE 2
AH HA HA.
EEEE!
WHAT THE HECK?
PFFT!
EPISODE 1
UUU...
THIS IS LAME.
TRA-LAAAA...
THE TRIBE OF PELKIAN
Episode 1: A Fated Meeting
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?
FINAL EPISODE
I'M REALLY...
...REALLY GLAD...
OH, I'M GLAD...
EPISODE 8
WHOA ...
YES! YES!
THAT'S IT! GET 'EM!
EPISODE 5
NO WAY!
THAT'S AWFUL.
HEY, WHOA.
HARA
HARA (PRET)
SEASON 3, EPISODE 7
THE GUY WHO KEPT THE NIGHTMARE JOURNAL.
HUH?
SO BY THE WAY, WHAT HAPPENED?
SEASON 2, EPISODE 10
THE CAST HAS GROWN, AND HE'S GOTTEN RATHER LOST.
THEY'RE BREAKING UP AGAIN?
SEASON 2, EPISODE 1
WHAT WERE ALL THOSE TEARS FOR?
IN THE SILHOUETTE...
...OF THE FLOWERS THAAAT...
WHAT? THERE'S MORE!?
"SEEKING FURTHER STIMULATION, IT MUST BE THAT THE HUMAN HEART...
"...COMPELS THE NIGHTMARES TO CREATE BAD DREAMS."
ON HIS SICKBED, HE CLOSED BY SAYING, "ONE TIRES OF HAPPINESS QUICKLY, BUT TRAGEDY IS BOTTOMLESS.
THE PERCENTAGE OF BAD DREAMS GRADUALLY INCREASED...
...AND HIS SPIRIT FINALLY BROKE.
OH. RIGHT.

6

DELICIOUS IN DUNGEON

RYOKO KUI

Translation: Taylor Engel **Lettering: Abigail Blackman**

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, [redacted] persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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WOR

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42. Nightmare

LAIOS.
HFF...
HFF...

COME BACK TO THE VILLAGE!
BUT FALIN'S STILL...

I DIDN'T LET YOU LEAVE SO YOU COULD SLAY DRAGONS.
GIVE US A GRAND-CHILD SOON.

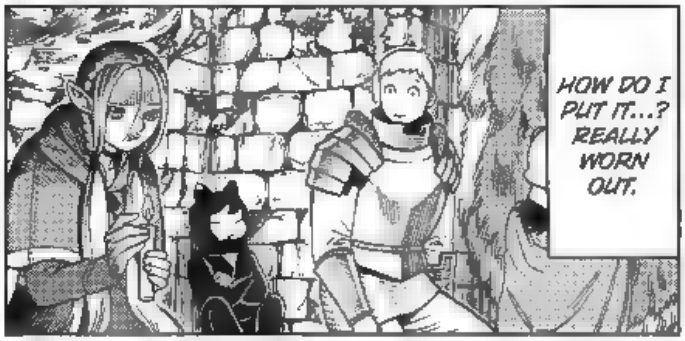
HOW LONG DO YOU INTEND TO LIVE LIKE THIS?
IT'S TIME YOU SHAPED UP AND LIVED PROPERLY.
FATHER.

NIYA (SMIRK)
NIYA

DO YOU THINK SOMEONE LIKE YOU CAN SUCCEED OUT THERE?
YOU RAN FROM BOTH SCHOOL AND THE ARMY. YOU COULDN'T FIT IN.

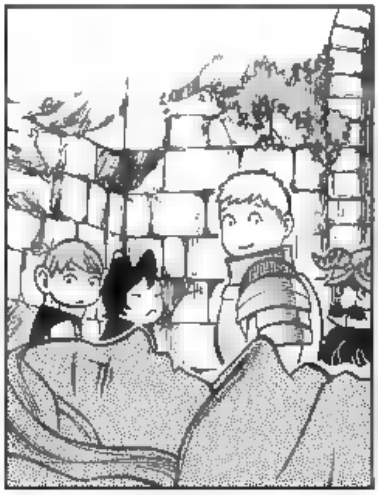
FORGET ABOUT HER.

YOU DON'T HAVE AN EYE FOR PEOPLE, SEE.
YOUR FRIENDS WILL TRICK YOU AND TAKE ALL THE CREDIT AGAIN, JUST LIKE BEFORE.
REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE A GOLD-PEELER?
YOU'VE GOT NO TALENT FOR EXPLORING THE DUNGEON EITHER.
DROP IT ALREADY !!
WE ALREADY TALKED THAT OUT!!
IT WAS THE SAME WITH ME.
YOU THOUGHT I WAS YOUR GOOD FRIEND...
...BUT I NEVER LIKED YOU MUCH—
I'M PRETTY SURE I WAS...
WHAT WAS I DOING AGAIN?
AND WHERE IS "HERE" ...?
I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM IN OVER A DECADE.
WHY ARE MY PARENTS HERE?
HANG ON.
NO...


HOW DO I PUT IT...? REALLY WORN OUT.

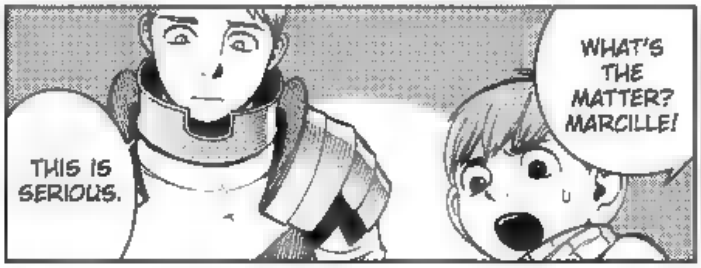
MARCILLE, WE'LL HANDLE THE GUARD SHIFTS TONIGHT. YOU REST.
HUH? WHY?
IT'S FINE. I DON'T NEED TO.

LATELY, MAR-CILLE'S LOOKED...



I'LL WAKE UP. YOU HEAR ME?
I'M NOT THAT TIRED.
I CAN'T BE THE ONLY ONE TO...
RIGHT AWAY.

COME ON, NONE OF THAT.
COME ON. COME ON.
EXCUSE ME? SERIOUSLY, WHAT!?


WHAT'S THE MATTER? MARCILLE!
THIS IS SERIOUS.

A MON-STER?
UH-HUH.

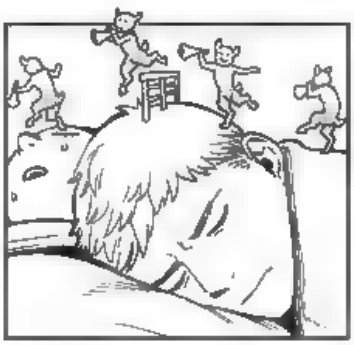
BUT BEFORE LONG, HER PEACEFUL BREATHING BECAME DISTURBED GROANS.
UUN
NH...
NH...
HFF! HAFF!

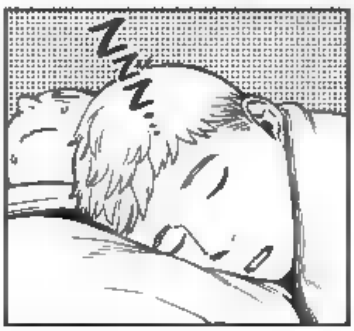
NIGHT-MARES.
MONSTERS THAT POSSESS HUMANS WHILE THEY SLEEP, GIVE THEM BAD DREAMS, AND FEED ON THEIR EMOTIONS.
IF YOU STAY TRAPPED IN A NIGHTMARE, YOU'LL GROW WEAK AND DIE.

LET'S TRY THAT METHOD.

SHURO GOT POSSESSED ONCE. HOW DID WE...?
FALIN WENT INTO HIS DREAM AND SAVED HIM.

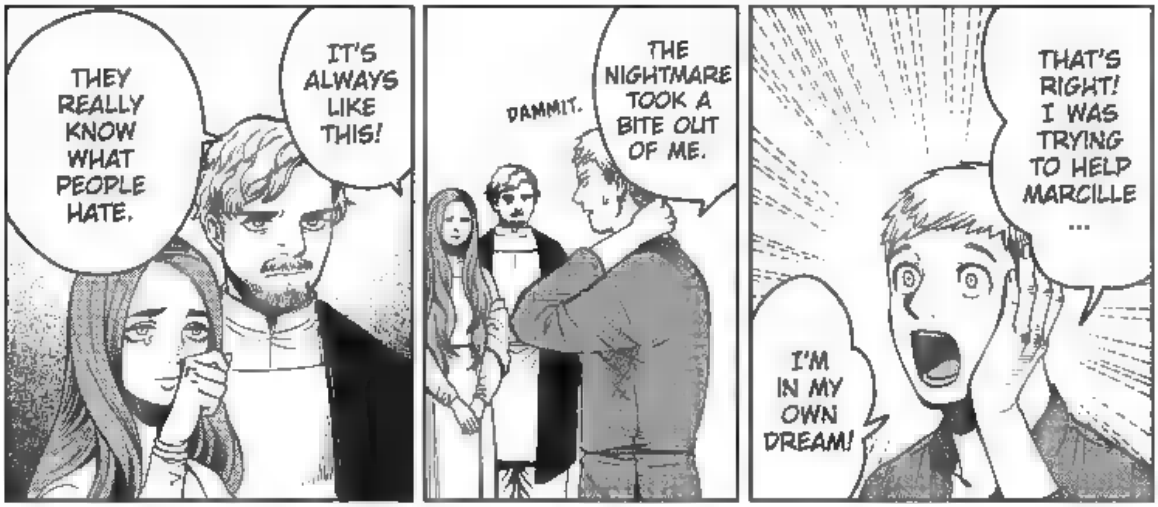
IF YOU'RE EMOTIONALLY DRAINED, IT'S HARD FOR YOU TO GET OUT OF THE NIGHTMARE.
UH.
WAKE UP, MARCILLE.
PECHI (SMAK) PECHI
DON'T.
IF YOU WAKE HER BY FORCE, YOU'LL HURT HER SPIRIT.





USE THE DREAMER AS A PILLOW, AND...

YOU'RE GOING INTO HER DREAM?
WON'T THAT JUST MAKE IT ANOTHER NIGHT-MARE?
SOMEBODY HAS TO MAKE HER SEE THAT IT'S A DREAM.


THEY REALLY KNOW WHAT PEOPLE HATE.
IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS!

DAMMIT.
THE NIGHTMARE TOOK A BITE OUT OF ME.

THAT'S RIGHT! I WAS TRYING TO HELP MARCILLE ...
I'M IN MY OWN DREAM!

HYUUUUU (WHOOOSH)

COME FORTH, MY STRONGEST SERVANT!

NOW I KNOW IT'S A DREAM, THOUGH, IT'S ALL MINE.

ZUN (WHUDD)

OKAY, HOW DO I GET INTO MARCILLE'S DREAM?

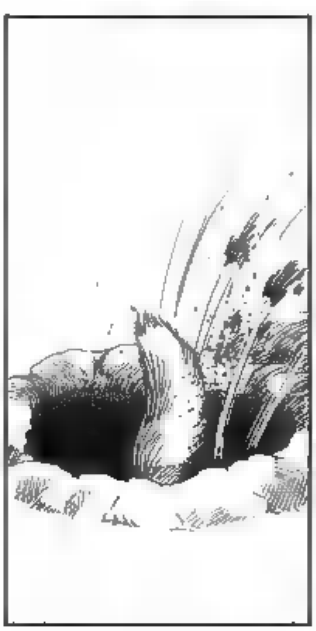
THIS IS WHY I DON'T LIKE THE SIXTH FLOOR.
IT'S BASICALLY ALL MENTAL ATTACKS.

HWOO...

MISHA (SLASH)
BARI (RIP)
BARI

GUNI (STRETCH)

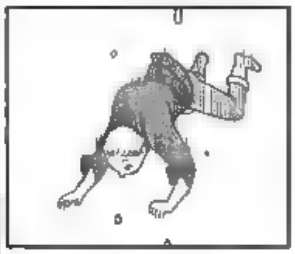
SHE'S UNDER MY HEAD RIGHT NOW.
THAT MEANS...
...I JUST HAVE TO DIG DOWN.



THOUGH IT ONLY WORKS IN YOUR OWN.

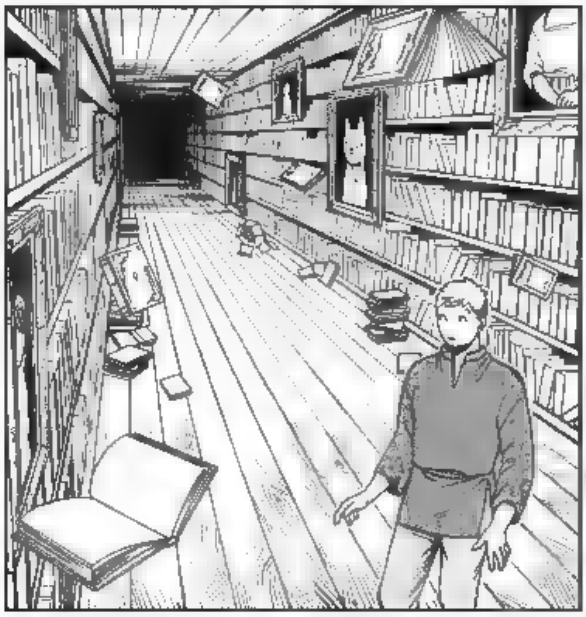
THIS IS WHAT'S GREAT ABOUT DREAMS.

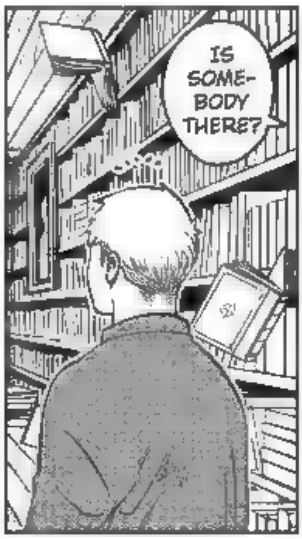
THAT WAS CLOSE.
IT...!!! DOESN'T HURT.
THE FALL ALMOST WOKE ME UP.



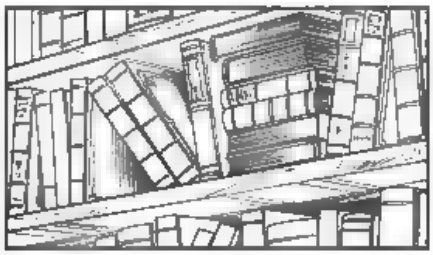
BESHAN (SPLAT)

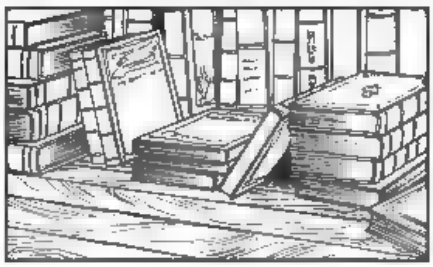
BOGO (CRUNCH)
WHOA!!




IS SOME-BODY THERE?

SO THIS IS MARCILLE'S DREAM...
IT'S KIND OF AMAZING.





MA... MAR-CILLE?
BIKU (FLINCH)
YOU'RE LITTLE.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
IT'S NOT SAFE HERE. RUN AWAY, HURRY.

KYORO (PEEK)
WH-WHO ARE YOU?
.....

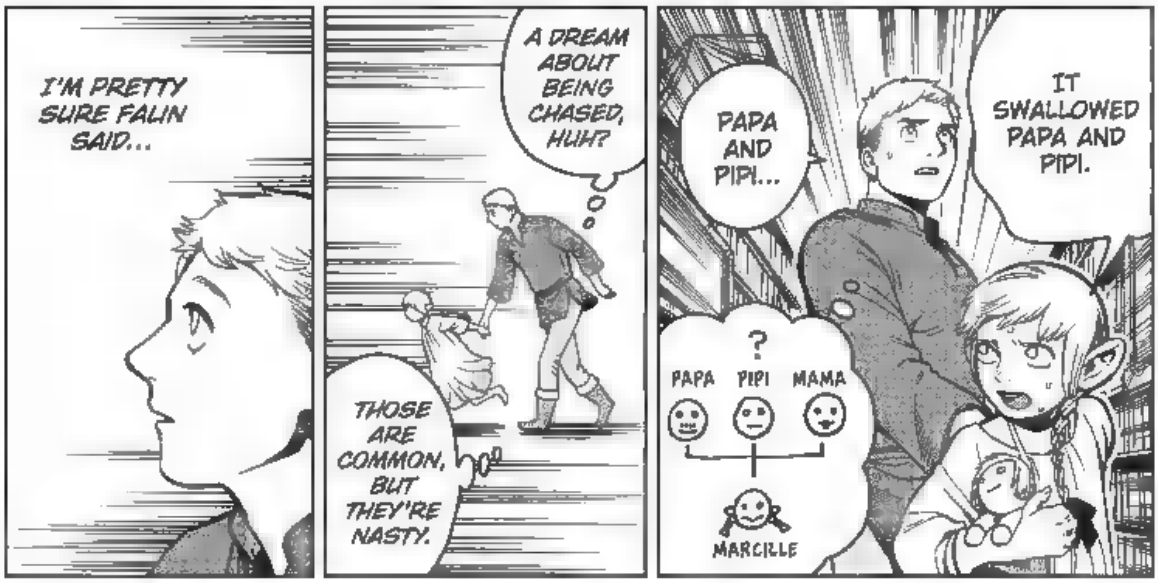
IT'S ME! LAIOS!
AND WE'RE IN YOUR DREAM.

A TREMOR ...?
OH...
KATA
KATA
KATA

KATA (RATTLE)
KATA
SO WAKE UP RIGHT NOW, AND...

WHAT'S "IT"?
NEVER MIND, JUST COME ON!

IT'S COMING !!
W-WE HAVE TO RUN.


I'M PRETTY SURE FALIN SAID...
A DREAM ABOUT BEING CHASED, HUH?
THOSE ARE COMMON, BUT THEY'RE NASTY.
PAPA AND PIPI...
IT SWALLOWED PAPA AND PIPI.
?
PAPA
PIPI
MAMA
MARCILLE

HUH...
A DREAM...
THAT MEANS YOU JUST HAVE TO PROTECT THE WOUND.

IT'S DANGEROUS, SO DON'T TRY IT, ALL RIGHT?

TRAUMA OR STRESSFUL THINGS.
THEY STIMULATE THOSE MEMORIES AND CAUSE BAD DREAMS.

NIGHTMARES LOVE EMOTIONAL WOUNDS.

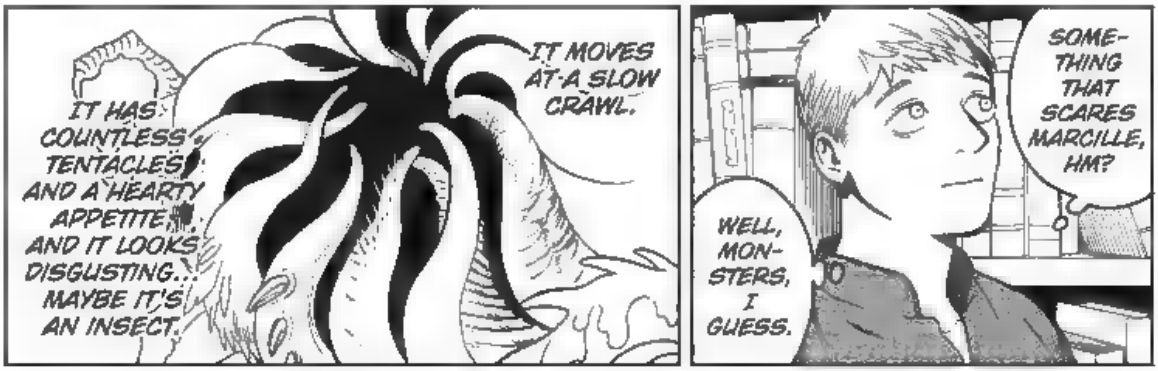
I MAY NOT LOOK LIKE IT, BUT I'M...

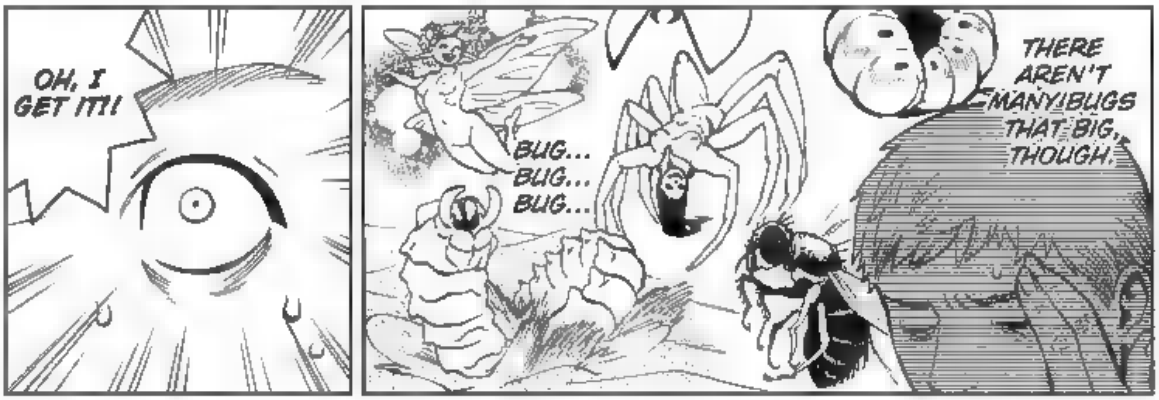
THAT'S DANGER-OUS!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING !?
IT'S FINE.

OKAY, I GOT IT!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT FOR YOU!
BA (TURN)

ZUGU
...PRETTY, WH...?
ZUGUGL GLORGW
AAAAH!

IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN EMBELLISHED A LOT...
SO THAT'S MARCILLE'S FEAR?
WHAT IS THAT THING?
IF SHE KNEW THIS WAS A DREAM, IT WOULDN'T BE A THREAT, BUT...
SHE'S RIGHT... I DON'T THINK I CAN DEFEAT THAT.
HOW SHOULD I KNOW!?
HFF...
HFF...
HFF...
NOWHERE IS SAFE.
NOBODY CAN FIGHT IT.
GATA (SHAKE)
GATA
IF WE'RE THIS FAR AWAY...
GYUU (SQUEEZE)
LET'S THINK OF A WAY TO BEAT IT TOGETHER.
IT'LL BE OKAY!
BIKU (FLINCH)
SO (PAT)


IT HAS COUNTLESS TENTACLES AND A HEARTY APPETITE. AND IT LOOKS DISGUSTING... MAYBE IT'S AN INSECT.
IT MOVES AT A SLOW CRAWL.
SOMETHING THAT SCARES MARCILLE, HM?
WELL, MONSTERS, I GUESS.


OH, I GET IT!
BUG... BUG... BUG...
THERE AREN'T MANY BUGS THAT BIG, THOUGH.

IT'S A WURM! THE DRAGON SPECIES!
IT'S GREEDY, SO IT'LL EAT ANYTHING THAT'S ALIVE!!
IT'S LEGS AND EYES HAVE ATROPHIED, SO IT'S LIKE A HUGE CATERPILLAR.
IT'S WEAK AGAINST FIRE AND LIGHT!
THAT'S A PRETTY CLASSY CHOICE!
IT MAKES ME KINDA HAPPY.
AH... AH...
IT'S A WURM !!!
BIKU
ビク

PETAR! (PAT)
NO!
HOLD ON TO ME!
(SHOOT)
(SHUDDER)
HUH?
WHEN DID IT...?

DID IT TOUCH YOU JUST NOW!?
IT ONLY GRAZED ME.
LET ME SEE.
RUN FOR IT! RUUUN !!

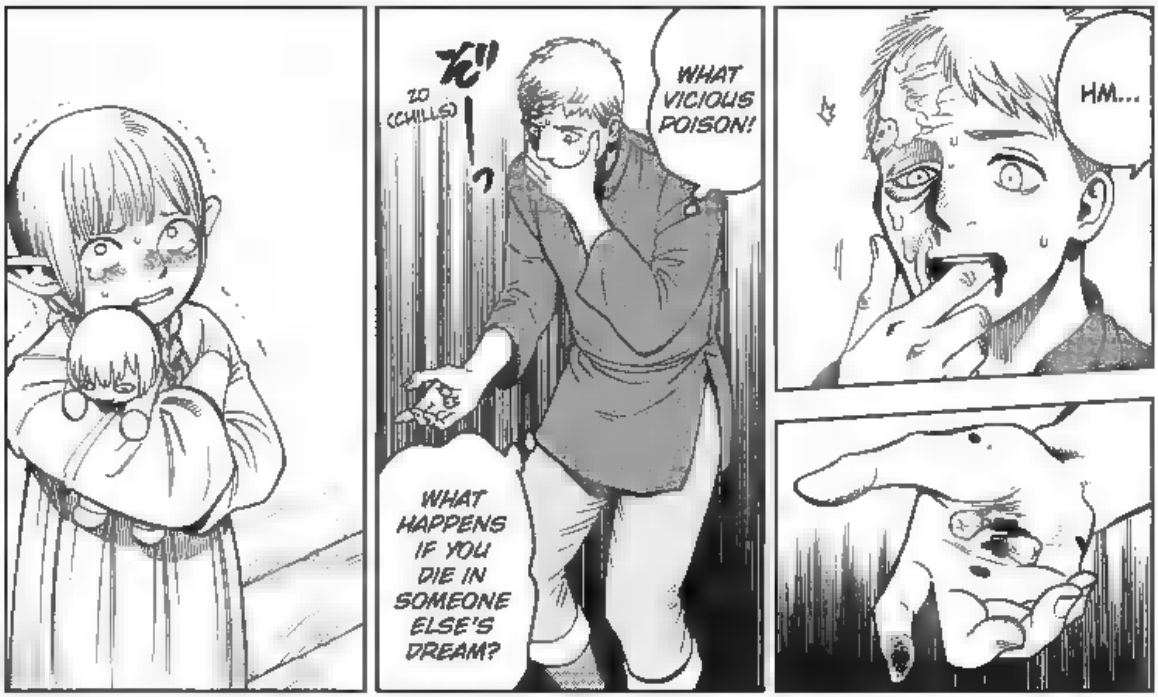
ZURURI (OOZE)

AH!

BA (LURCH)
AGH!
BOTO (PLOP)
WHAT IS THIS ...?
BOTO

UH-OH. I SCARED HER MORE.
THE NIGHT-MARE'S GETTING STRON-GER.

GORI
GORI (GRUNCH)
GARI (SKRAPE)
GORI


ZO (CHILLS)
WHAT VICIOUS POISON!
WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DIE IN SOMEONE ELSE'S DREAM?
HM...

JIWA (TEARY)
MAGIC ...
IT'S OKAY! YOU HAVE MAGIC POWERS!
YOU CAN DEFEAT THAT THING ON YOUR OWN.
ENCOUR-AGE MAR-CILLE!
NIKO (SMILE)
NO.
DON'T BE UNEASY OR SCARED. THAT'S WHAT IT WANTS.
BIKU (FLINCH)

BARA (SCATTER)
ZUUUN (DOOM)
BARA
GARA (CLATTER)

...SHE GOT TURNED INTO THIS.
WHEN I TRIED TO DEFEAT IT WITH MAGIC...
"SHE"?
DID I SAY SOME-THING WRONG?
IT DESTA-BILIZED MORE.
WHEN...
I SEE!
MARCILLE FEELS BAD THAT HER RESURRECTION SPELL TURNED FALIN INTO THAT THING.
AHA...
IF SHE TRIED TO DEFEAT IT, THAT MEANS...
IS THAT FALIN!?
WAIT, IS...
MAR-CILLE!
I-IT'S HERE AGAIN...
SFX: GU (SQUEEZE)
YOU CAN'T JUST RUN.
YOU HAVE TO CONFRONT IT.
HUH?
...MARCILLE'S AFRAID OF DEATH!

DWAAAH!!?
BESIDES, YOU'RE USED TO SEEING CORPSES, RIGHT!?

IT'S FINE. YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF, MARCILLE!
ZUZU (PUSH)
HUH? HUH? WHAT!?

HERE IN THE DUNGEON, EVEN IF YOU DIE, YOU CAN COME BACK TO LIFE.
EVEN FALIN'S STILL ALIVE, THANKS TO YOUR RES-URRECTION SPELL.

HYUO (SHWOO)

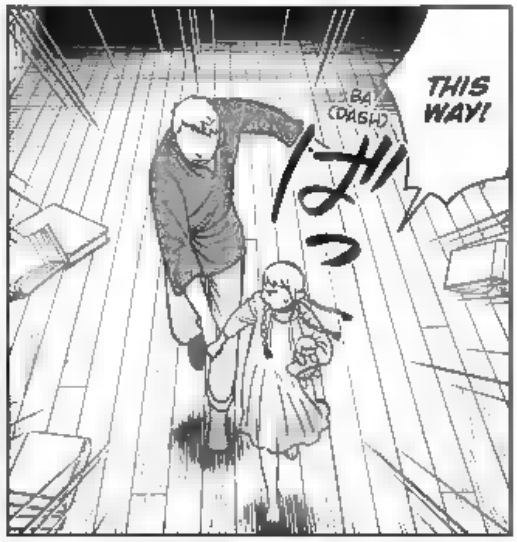
GOOOOO (SWOOOSH)

N-NO!
IT!
IT'S ONLY PULLING ME!?
IT'S SUCKING ME IN!
WAIT...
GOOOO
HUH!?

GRAB MY HAND!

HFF!
HFF!
W-WAIT A MINUTE, MARCILLE.
I CAN'T BREATHE ...

!
IT'S NOT POISON!
I'M AGING AT AN INCRED-IBLE RATE.


THIS WAY!
BA (DASH)
ばっ

MAYBE IT'S NOT A LIVING THING AT ALL...?
IS THERE ANY LIVING CREATURE THAT CAN DO THINGS LIKE THIS?
HFF...
HFF...
SOMETHING'S WEIRD HERE.

ONCE I REST A LITTLE, I'LL BE ABLE TO RUN AGAIN, SO...
NO, I...
LIAR!

SO YOU WON'T COME WITH ME EITHER?

HAFF... HAFF...

AND FALIN!
EVERY-BODY!
EVERYONE GIVES UP ON RUNNING WITH ME, AND THEN IT SWALLOWS THEM!
PAPA TOO!
AND PIPI!
SO I STUDIED LOTS AND LOTS OF MAGIC, BUT...
MAR-CILLE...
DID YOUR FATHER DIE YOUNG?
BUT IF IT TURNED FALIN INTO THIS, THEN...
...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO...
...THAT I RUN FASTER THAN EVERYONE ELSE...
SNIFF!
AT PAPA'S FUNERAL, MAMA TOLD ME...
BY THE WAY, WAS PIPI A RELATIVE ...?
...SO I'M GOING TO HAVE TO WATCH LOTS OF PEOPLE GO AWAY.
PIPI'S A BIRD.

SHE'S WORRIED THAT THE PEOPLE SHE'S CLOSE TO WILL DIE BEFORE SHE DOES.
A BIRD. HM?
I SEE...
MARCILLE ISN'T AFRAID OF DEATH.
ZURIR!
ZURI
ZURI (CREEP)
BUT WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO!?
I CAN'T DO ANY-THING!!
THE MORE FRIGHTENED YOU ARE, THE STRONGER IT GETS.
CALM DOWN.
MAR-CILLE.
GAKU (QUAKE)
AHH...
GAKU
MAR-CILLE!
ZURI
ZURI

I MEAN, LOOK AT ALL THESE BOOKS!
THERE WAS NOTHING IN MY DREAM.
BIKU (FLINCH)
NO, YOU CAN!!
BECAUSE YOU'RE AMAZING, MARCILLE!!
YOU CAN DO IT, MARCILLE!
DON'T GET DISCOURAGED. BE CONFIDENT!
YOU'VE WORKED HARD FOR SUCH A LONG TIME!
IF I HAD THE BOOK SHE HAS...
...I COULD USE MAGIC MORE PERFECTLY, BUT...
THEN WISH FOR THAT!
GUI (TUG)
NO... GET UP!
LET'S RUN AWAY.
MY MAGIC ISN'T COMPLETE ANYWAY.
GUI

DON'T GIVE UP...
I KNOW YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO IT THIS TIME!
DON'T BE AFRAID.
IF YOU WISH HARD, YOU CAN DO ANY-THING!
AAAAH!
ZUBO (POP)
ズボ
NO!
NO, NO, NO, NO...!

JIROR
(GLARE)

パチ
PACHI
(BLINK)

GOOOOOOO!
THAT'S IT, MAR-CILLE!

!AA
WAA
GO OWHUNKO
IS THAT HOW YOU USE IT!?
IT HURTS.

OH-HO.
BORI (SCRITCH)
BORI

GAKUN (JUDDER)
BIKU (FLINCH)

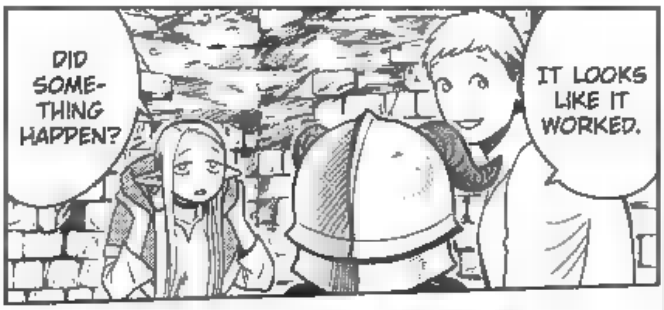
YOU'RE AWAKE?
YOU WERE BOTH HAVING NIGHT-MARES.
ARE YOU OKAY?

NNGH...
OH!
.....

FWAA...

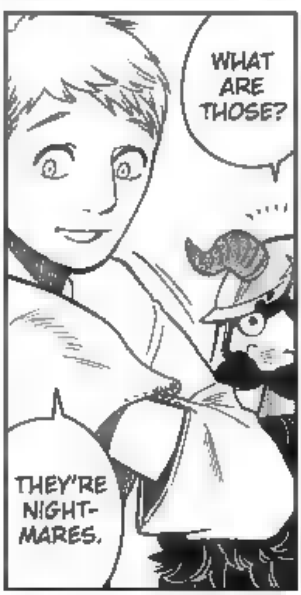
I THINK I DREAMED ABOUT SOMETHING TIRING.
...I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER.
NN...
BORI BORI

WAAH!
SHE'S GOING BACK TO SLEEP!!
ZZZ...
MAR-CILLE, NO!! WAKE UP!!


DID SOME-THING HAPPEN?
IT LOOKS LIKE IT WORKED.

LET ME SEE YOUR PILLOW FOR A SECOND.

A DREAM ...?
I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER.
I THINK I DREAMED ABOUT SOMETHING FUN, THOUGH...


WHAT ARE THOSE?
THEY'RE NIGHT-MARES.

ZARAA (SHUFFA)
BLEH!

PI (RIP)
PI

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN IN YOUR PILLOW FOR QUITE A WHILE.
WE SHOULD CHECK EVERYONE ELSE'S PILLOWS TOO.
STILL, THERE'S A TON OF THEM.
GANRA (RATTLE)
GARA
ZOWA (SHUDDER)
ZOWA
YOU'RE KIDDING...

THEY LURK IN PEOPLE'S PILLOWS AND GIVE THEM BAD DREAMS.

SHOULD I GRAB MY CHANCE AND BAIL...?

SENSHI, ARE THESE EDIBLE?
I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT THEY'D TASTE LIKE.
YES, OF COURSE.

NIGHTMARES ARE ALSO CALLED "SHENS." THEY'RE ACTUALLY RELATED TO DRAGONS.
IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY, THEY'RE SORT OF DRAGON-ISH.
YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?

WHOA!
HERO (LOL)

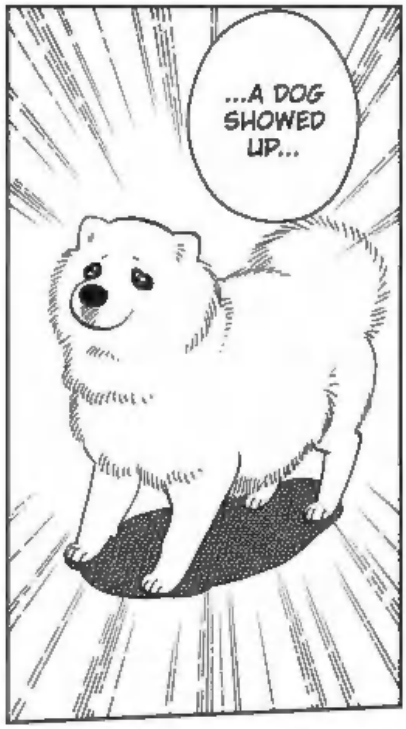
FIRST, MAKE THEM SPIT UP ANY GUNK...
...BY SOAKING THEM IN HOT WATER FOR A WHILE...

COVER.
PAKUN (CLINK)

ADD WINE.
CHO (DRIZZLE)
CHO

SET THE NIGHT-MARES ON SOME MELTED BUTTER.

パファ
PAFUA (Ppuff)
... THEY'RE DO—
FINISH WITH A TOUCH OF SOY SAUCE, AND...
じわ
JIWA
じわ
JIWA (SIZZLE)
JIWA
じわ
パカ!
PAKA (POP)
PAKAAA
パカ
ふわっ
FUWAA (WAFT)
OH-HO?
I THINK I REMEMBER NOW.
THAT'S RIGHT. I WAS RUNNING FROM SOMETHING, AND THEN...
OH! THAT'S ME.
YOU'RE LITTLE!
THE DREAM THE SHENS ATE TURNED INTO A MIRAGE.
ゆら
YURA (RIPPLE)
WHAT'S THIS?
ゆら
YURA



CHAPTER 42: THE END

Translation Notes

Page 12
Hien, Benichidori, and Maizuru are all bird-related names: *Hien* means "flying swallow," *benichidori* is "crimson plover," and *maizuru* is "dancing crane." *Asebi* is the Japanese name for *Pieris japonica*, or Japanese andromeda, a poisonous shrub with clusters of delicate, white, bell-shaped flowers.

Page 13
Starting during the Edo period (1603 to 1868) and all the way up into the early twentieth century, it was extremely common to preface women's names with an *O*. Although the *O* is technically an honorific (similar to *-san*), it was generally added just to make the name sound nicer/cuter and was more of a nickname than anything.

Page 28
Previously, Kabru has exclusively used the more macho pronoun *ore* even with older people outside his group, but he's intentionally switched to using the humbler *boku* when he talks to people in Shuro's and Laios's groups. The switch itself isn't that unusual, but it does make him seem shiftier and more manipulative in this context.

Page 46
Like Asebi, Inutade shares her name with a plant, *Persicaria longiseta*, or tufted knotweed. It's an annual herb that has elongated clusters of pink flowers.

Page 70
According to the theory of the alchemist Paracelsus, gnomes are elemental spirits that inhabit the earth, so the "essiet" employed by Holm is the spirit type of "gnome."

Page 126
A *go* is an old Japanese unit of measurement. When applied to liquids, it's equal to about 180 ml. One *go* of uncooked rice was considered to be the amount needed for an average meal.

Page 133
According to superstition in Japan, because dogs aren't fooled by illusions, foxes are notoriously afraid of them. However, since Laios didn't know exactly what the shapeshifter was when he decided to go canine on it, he probably just got lucky here.

Page 202
The saying Laios is quoting is a proverb that means "It's simple courtesy to clean up after yourself."

Page 203
The final phrase on this page is a dialect phrase from the Tohoku region given as a standard ending for folktales; it's apparently a corrupted pronunciation of the word *tottokare* (meaning "valuable" or "appreciated"), but it's just used to mean "that's the end." It's also used to "force" a conclusion to stories that end in a scattered or unsatisfactory way.

To be continued...